United Nations S/PV 4122

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4122nd Meeting
Wednesday, 29 March 2000, 11.25 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau (S/2000/250)

00-36745 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 11.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau (S/2000/250)

The President: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General of 24 March 2000 on developments in Guinea-Bissau (S/2000/250).

"The Security Council pays tribute to the people of Guinea-Bissau for the success of the transitional process which has led to the organization of free, fair and transparent elections. It congratulates the Representative of the Secretary-General, the staff of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) and the Members of the United Nations for all they have done to assist the people of Guinea-Bissau in this task. The Council also thanks the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), Member States which contributed to the trust fund established to support the activities of UNOGBIS and the Friends of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau for their contributions to consolidating peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council welcomes the swearing in of President Kumba Yala on 17 February 2000 and the return to constitutional and democratic order in Guinea-Bissau following the holding of free and fair presidential and legislative elections. The Council affirms that all concerned, particularly the former military junta, elections, as part of the Abuja Accord (S/1998/1028, annex).

"The Security Council encourages all concerned in Guinea-Bissau to work together closely in a spirit of tolerance to strengthen democratic values, to protect the rule of law, to depoliticize the army and to safeguard human rights. The Council supports the efforts made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau to redefine the role of the military in Guinea-Bissau in accordance with the rule of law and democracy.

"The Security Council expresses its support for the newly elected Government of Guinea-Bissau and encourages the new authorities to develop and to implement programmes devised to consolidate peace and national reconciliation. The Council calls on the international community to support the Government's three-month transitional programme, pending the organization of a new round-table conference. The Council agrees with the comment made by the Secretary-General, in paragraph 24 of his report, to the effect that sustained support of the international community is crucial for the consolidation of the progress achieved so far, and for helping Guinea-Bissau lay a durable foundation for a better life for its people."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2000/11.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4123

Security Council

Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4123rd Meeting
Friday, 31 March 2000, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	Argentina	Ms. González Posse
	Canada	Mr. Lalani
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Issouf Maiga
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 28 and 30 of resolution 1284 (1999) and paragraph 5 of resolution 1281 (1999) (S/2000/208)

00-37252 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 28 and 30 of resolution 1284 (1999) and paragraph 5 of resolution 1281 (1999) (S/2000/208)

The President: The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraphs 28 and 30 of resolution 1284 (1999) and paragraph 5 of resolution 1281 (1999), document S/2000/208.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2000/266, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2000/266) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, China, France, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1293 (2000).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to note that this is the last formal meeting to take place under the current presidency of Bangladesh. I take this opportunity formally to thank everyone, and particularly the support services — the Secretariat, the interpreters and the summary writers. They have been very, very supportive and helpful. I extend to all of them sincere thanks from my side and from my team.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.

United Nations S/PV 4124

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4124th Meeting
Friday, 7 April 2000, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Axworthy	(Canada)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahmed
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2000/205)

00-38253 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Expression of sympathy in connection with the death of the former President of Tunisia

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the Council, to express grief and sorrow at the passing of His Excellency Mr. Habib Bourguiba, leader and former President of the Republic of Tunisia. As the father of Tunisia and as one of the architects of the Organization of African Unity, President Bourguiba was deeply committed to the cause of peace, and was an embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of generations of men and women in Tunisia and throughout Africa.

On behalf of the Council, I should like to request the representative of Tunisia to convey to the bereaved family and to the Government and the people of Tunisia our profound condolences.

Mr. Tekaya (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for your expression of sympathy with the Government and the people of Tunisia in connection with the death of our leader, President Habib Bourguiba, the father of independent Tunisia. History will never forget the great work he accomplished in Tunisia or that he was a fervent advocate of just causes, supporting independence movements in Africa and throughout the world. He was among the founders of the Organization of African Unity and of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. He was a great believer in a culture of peace, tolerance and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

May God have mercy upon him.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of April, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of March 2000. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Chowdhury for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2000/205)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. John Renninger, Officer-in-Charge of the Asia and the Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Renninger to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, document S/2000/205, and a letter dated 4 April 2000 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Afghanistan addressed to the President of the Council, document S/2000/282.

Members of the Council have also received photocopies of the report of the United Nations Interagency Gender Mission to Afghanistan, which took place from 12 to 24 November 1997.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. John Renninger, Officer-in-Charge of the Asia and the Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs, on the situation in Afghanistan. I call on Mr. Renninger.

Mr. Renninger: The Afghan conflict has now entered into its twenty-second year without any tangible hope for a solution in the foreseeable future. The suffering of the Afghan people continues unabated. It is also disturbing to note that the negative effects of the conflict have begun to spread beyond the borders of Afghanistan. Other countries in the region and beyond already suffer from the spillover of many Afghan-based problems, including the flood of refugees, narcotics and arms smuggling, as well as cross-border activities related to terrorism. On behalf of the Secretary-General, I therefore welcome this opportunity to express our concerns before the Council and to benefit from the suggestions and observations of the Governments which are attending today's meeting.

As members of the Council are aware, the most recent quarterly report of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan was issued on 17 March. In my briefing today, I will provide an update on recent political and military developments affecting Afghanistan and I shall also focus on humanitarian aspects and human rights, including the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Let me start with recent political developments. The talks involving the Taliban movement and the United Front, which took place from 7 to 9 March in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), have already been noted in the Secretary-General's recent report. During the talks, neither side changed its basic position. While the Taliban insisted that the opposition had to join the Islamic Emirate and to accept Mullah Omar as its leader, the United Front reiterated that an interim Government, which would include third parties, should be established. We understand that the Organization of the Islamic Conference, chaired by the Islamic Republic of Iran, is attempting soon to arrange further talks between the two sides, which would also be held in Jeddah. The United Nations supports fully this effort and will take part in those talks when and if they take place.

Initiatives of non-belligerent Afghan individuals and groups appear to have made some progress. A 30-member executive council of the Rome process, initiated by former King Zahir Shah, convened in Rome on 11 and 12 March with a view to preparing for an emergency *loya jirga*, or a traditional Grand Assembly meeting, inside Afghanistan. These preparations are continuing.

The "six plus two" group of member States that have been concerned with the achievement of peace in Afghanistan has also been active in the recent period, having convened a high-level meeting at Headquarters at the end of February. The meeting addressed the unprecedented increase in the production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan, an extremely worrisome development. The Secretary-General therefore welcomes the initiative of the "six plus two" group to address this issue. He is pleased that this initiative has led to the preparation of a technical meeting, which will be convened from 8 to 10 May in Vienna and will involve all members of the "six plus two" and the major donor countries.

There were a few other noteworthy developments in and around Afghanistan. There was a process of rapprochement between Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud and his Uzbek rivals, Generals Dostum and Abdul Malik, who were ousted from Afghanistan by the Taliban in 1997 and 1998, respectively.

On 26 March, Ismail Khan, the former Governor of Herat and one of the most important prisoners of the Taliban movement since 1997, escaped from a jail in Kandahar, apparently with the help and connivance of a Taliban guard. The Taliban launched an extensive manhunt in south-western Afghanistan, putting a bounty on his head and threatening to punish with a death sentence those who would help the fugitives. There are contradictory stories and reports about Ismail Khan's present whereabouts.

In concluding this brief review of political developments, I can only note that it is not possible to be optimistic about an early cease-fire between the warring factions, let alone negotiations leading to the formation of a broad-based Government, as repeatedly demanded by the Security Council.

Now I should like to turn to the military situation, which, I fear, is equally gloomy. A stalemate has persisted on the battlefield throughout the winter period,

with the front lines remaining essentially unchanged. As in the past, severe winter weather and the observance of the holy month of Ramadan forced the two sides to reduce the intensity of the fighting. However, this did not mean that it came to a complete halt. The United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) was informed of continuous clashes in various places, particularly after mid-January.

The intensity and frequency of the clashes between the two sides are steadily on the rise. There is every indication that preparations for organized, large-scale offensives are now well under way on both sides. Reports are abundant regarding active recruitment of fighters, arrivals of reinforcements and continuous supply of war-making *materiél* from outside. Once again, the Afghan warring factions seem ready to repeat the vicious annual cycle of violence with the arrival of spring. I should therefore like to draw the Council's attention to the possible start of a major spring offensive in the near future.

UNSMA believes that the Taliban remain determined to pursue a military solution and to defeat the United Front in the North. It appears that the Taliban and the United Front have already started tactical moves in order to capture terrain of operational importance in the northern provinces of Samangan and Baghlan. UNSMA has received reports in recent days about increased movements of Taliban fighters and equipment in and around Kabul. It seems that the Taliban are once again concentrating their forces at the front lines in the Shomali Plains, which lie only about 40 kilometres to the north of Kabul. Indeed, today there are reports of heavy clashes between the two sides north-east of Kabul.

The United Front might try to launch its own offensive in order to regain lost ground and tilt the military balance in its favour. The reported rapprochement between Commander Massoud and General Dostum may encourage the United Front to heighten the level of its military operations. However, the potential effectiveness of a new Massoud-Dostum coalition remains to be seen. Moreover, the reported escape of Ismail Khan, a close ally of Commander Massoud, could have an impact on this situation.

It should be recalled that the Secretary-General has repeatedly noted in his reports to the General Assembly and the Security Council that external interference is one of the biggest impediments to peace, as it provides the essential means for the continuous civil war in Afghanistan.

The reported involvement of non-Afghan fighters in the conflict, mainly on the side of the Taliban, remains of great concern. Such reports, including from the local media, indicate that in some cases non-Afghan fighters are openly recruited through religious schools in Pakistan and sent into Afghanistan by a convoy of buses and trucks. These foreign volunteers are trained and armed in Afghanistan before being dispatched to the front lines. Observers estimate that, during the past weeks, as many as several thousand additional fighters have arrived in Afghanistan. The involvement of Arabs and Central Asians has been reported as well. The growing reliance on foreign fighters by the warring factions appears to reflect increasing difficulties they face in recruiting soldiers locally.

I should now like to turn to the humanitarian aspects of the situation in Afghanistan. The country continues to suffer from the accumulated effects of war and economic collapse, with basic services virtually non-existent. Conditions in urban areas are particularly miserable. Unemployment in Kabul has reached dramatic proportions, with approximately one quarter of all families surviving on United Nations-subsidized bread and many others on remittances from abroad.

The plight of civilians displaced by conflict constitutes a major problem for the international community. Limited food assistance is provided to internally displaced persons in Kabul and additional food-for-work projects are being developed. Efforts by the United Nations to provide cross-line assistance to the Panjshir Valley were relatively successful at the end of 1999, but have since stalled. The Office of the United Nations Coordinator is continuing to negotiate access with both sides, but conditionalities imposed by the Taliban and rumours of impending offensives seem to have hardened positions. This leaves over 7,000 families of internally displaced persons in the Panjshir Valley in a most precarious situation.

The situation in areas of low-intensity fighting is also quite serious. Displacement, food shortages and a measles epidemic have resulted in close to 1,000 deaths in northern Hazarajat. Atrocities against civilians have compounded the levels of human suffering.

In addition to all of these problems, southern Afghanistan is experiencing at the present time drought conditions which could result in a serious lack of drinking water in urban areas and increased outbreaks of disease.

The United Nations is also most worried by the situation in Kandahar, where searches of United Nations premises and intimidation of staff in recent days caused the withdrawal of all international staff from the area. It is hoped that the Taliban will soon provide the United Nations Coordinator with reliable guarantees against the repetition of such incidents, which are a precondition for the return of international staff. This matter is all the more pressing as Kandahar serves as the centre for assistance in combating the effects of the drought in southern Afghanistan.

As regards refugees, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has facilitated the voluntary return of over 3,000 Afghans from Pakistan since the beginning of this year. In February, the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNHCR agreed on a joint programme for the repatriation of Afghan refugees from Iran. The programme is expected to curb forcible returns by facilitating the voluntary departure of some 3,000 Afghans per week and increasing the level of international protection for those unable or unwilling to return.

I now turn to the area of human rights. The human rights situation in Afghanistan, especially with the onset of another fighting season, must continue to receive the priority attention of the international community. Twenty years of conflict have taken a terrible toll on the Afghan population, killing countless civilians directly while curtailing many other lives through dire poverty and underdevelopment. Indeed, the living conditions of Afghans are so precarious that diarrhoea, an easily treatable disease, is thought to be responsible for the deaths of an estimated 85,000 children each year. Similarly, a recent epidemic of measles, another preventable disease, took the lives of 650 children.

With another season of fighting about to begin, there is every reason to fear that the pattern of targeting civilians will continue. Gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including summary executions, arbitrary detention and forced displacement of civilians, have occurred in a systematic manner and sow the seeds for further bouts of fighting.

Recent killings include the alleged execution of elders in Gosfandi, as they tried to mediate the conflict in the Sang Charak area. This type of experience does not augur well for the future and points to the absolute importance of concerted efforts to bring the war to an end and to allow Afghans to fulfil their desire for peace, a peace that is also a prerequisite for the enjoyment of human rights.

I would now like to address the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. In recent years, especially since the military advances of the Taliban movement, the international community has been intensely engaged with the situation of women and girls in that country, particularly in those areas under the control of the Taliban. The abhorrent measures imposed by the Taliban on the women and girls of Afghanistan have been repeatedly deplored by the Secretary-General and have been condemned in numerous resolutions of this Council, the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women.

Cultural norms and traditions in Afghanistan have historically been conservative and characterized by a strong division of gender roles. Political, economic and social decisions tend to be monopolized by males. Increased access of women to education, health services and employment was part of State modernization projects at the beginning of the twentieth century and continued until the late 1970s. This led to a growth in social demand for female education and created a female professional elite, especially in the capital city of Kabul. Nevertheless, the extreme economic poverty of the country and the urban-biased development policies kept most of the rural population, especially women, on the periphery as concerns modernization.

Women's access to education, health, employment and public life has been extremely negatively affected following the Taliban military victories. Where gender issues are concerned, the Taliban ideology amounted to a series of edicts banning women from all public activities. The pre-existing vulnerable situation of girls and women — the result of continuous war, conservative cultural norms, the destruction of social and institutional infrastructures and the absence of policies for the rehabilitation of the social and productive sectors — was significantly aggravated by these Taliban edicts, especially the ban on all types of formal education for girls.

Evidence from the field appears to indicate that in the last 18 months there has been a slow shift in the Taliban's position on the access of women to health services, education and employment opportunities. This shift is, for the most part, due to increased demand from local communities for health and education for girls and for income-generating opportunities for women, especially for war widows heading households. The assistance community has also been instrumental in preparing the ground for this shift through continued

advocacy, principled engagement and constructive dialogue and negotiation with the authorities.

It should also be noted that the restrictions once imposed on female staff of United Nations agencies have been eased in practice. United Nations female staff now travel and work in Afghanistan without major difficulty.

Some relaxation of Taliban policy on women's employment in the health sector dates back to 1997, when women doctors, nurses and midwives were allowed to continue their medical practice in hospitals. More recently, in 1999, about 40 female medical students who were forced to leave Kabul University before receiving their degrees were allowed to continue their education. In the first quarter of this year, the authorities in Kandahar agreed, after lengthy negotiation with the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization, to start a nursing school in Kandahar for 50 female and 50 male nurses.

Progress in the supply of alternatives to formal education in Taliban-ruled areas has been achieved through patient and persistent negotiation and advocacy between local communities, the assistance community and the Taliban authorities. Community-based schools for girls and boys are being established in rural areas, while privately organized home-based girls' education is on the increase in urban areas. The BBC is developing an education programme through radio as an innovative attempt to increase access to education in the country.

Among the most recent developments of note was the establishment in November 1999 of nine community girls' schools that are financed by local communities in agreement with the authorities in Kandahar province and 13 such girls' schools in Kabul.

Currently Afghanistan has no formal economic sectors. In practice, agriculture and small home-based crafts provide the only opportunities for women's employment. Female employment opportunities are limited to carpet weaving, tailoring, embroidery, soap making and similar types of activities. The assistance community has been involved in projects creating this type of employment, and some of their projects have had an impact on the lives of grass-roots women and their families in terms of providing them with subsistence income.

Women have no access to markets, due to their confinement, which leads in many cases to their exploitation by male middlemen, except in cases where non-governmental organizations take the responsibility of the final marketing of their production.

Despite the different policy position adopted by the Taliban and the United Front regarding the role of women, women in the areas controlled by the United Front also suffer from limited access to education, health services and income-generating employment. The region controlled by the United Front has been historically the poorest of Afghanistan. Continued civil war and cultural norms further aggravate the situation of women in that area. However, there would be more windows of opportunity for girls' education in this region if the resources could be made available.

While noting the limited progress that has been recorded recently in improving the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, the overall situation remains unacceptable and requires the continuous and sustained attention of the international community. Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, will be pleased to respond to any comments or questions regarding the situation of women and girls.

The President: I wish to thank Mr. Renninger for his comprehensive briefing and for the somewhat disturbing analysis.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank the President for giving me this opportunity to inform the Security Council about some of the activities we have undertaken since 17 January in the sanctions Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999) relating to the situation in Afghanistan.

The fact that we have been able to make significant progress is due, among other things, to very effective coordination with the Secretariat and to excellent readiness on the part of the members of the Committee. I must take this opportunity to acknowledge once again the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Aleksandar Martinovic.

It is in this spirit that we adopted the Committee's guidelines, which provide the necessary basis for the achievement of the work of the Committee. We have also sent a letter to Member States, in accordance with paragraphs 6 (a) and 10 of resolution 1267 (1999), requesting more information on the measures they have adopted pursuant to paragraphs 4 (a) and (b). In response to that letter, in little more than two months we have

received over 50 written communications from various Member States. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of the resolution, on 4 April the Committee adopted its first report on this issue, which I submitted to the President of the Security Council on the same date. That report, which was circulated under the symbol S/2000/282, will be updated as more communications are received from Member States.

I wish to point out that the Committee has received information from a number of Member States that they are awaiting the designations referred to in paragraphs 4 (b) and 6 (e) in order to report on the full implementation of paragraph 4 of the resolution. I will refer to the issue of designation, which is presently before the Committee, at a later stage.

Continuing on the subject of the work undertaken by the Committee, thanks to information provided by Member States the Committee has updated the list of aircraft referred to in paragraph 4 (a) of resolution 1267 (1999), which was adopted at the end of last year under the interim chairmanship of the United Kingdom. The Committee authorized one humanitarian flight, at the request of a German non-governmental organization, to transport sick children from Afghanistan for treatment in Germany. In that endeavour we had the assistance of both of the States on whose territories the aircraft was to make stopovers, as well as of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which have jointly monitored these flights along with national authorities and which later reported to the Committee as to compliance.

We have authorized 360 flight segments from the cities of Kabul and Kandahar in Afghanistan to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia — with stopovers in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates — so that 12,000 Afghan pilgrims could comply with their religious obligation of the haj. In accordance with the Committee's guidelines, the flights were monitored by national authorities and by the United Nations Development Programme, both in Sharjah and in Jeddah. As in the case of previous flights, those authorities have briefed the Committee.

Last week, after some technical delays, return flights began to transport the 12,000 pilgrims back to Afghanistan. It is hoped that the return flights will be concluded by the date set, namely, 23 April. I am truly pleased that despite a number of impediments, these flights took place successfully.

As I expected, the organization of these flights on several occasions required the attention of the Committee on related matters. Those included changes in flight timetables, technical monitoring and servicing of the aircraft, the use of one of those flights to transport essential materials for an aviation security project of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the repair of four turbine engines in Jordan, and even the hiring of additional aircraft from Air Gulf Falcon due to the unavailability of one of the authorized planes.

All of this required active participation on the part of members of the Committee, United Nations staff, UNDP, national authorities and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). I would also like to point out that with regard to the haj, significant cooperation was provided by the Taliban authorities, who to date have provided the Committee with all the information required of it.

Thanks to contributions from the authorities in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, UNDP required only $20,000 for the whole extensive operation of the monitoring of the haj flights in Sharjah and Jeddah. Faced with the requirement to monitor those flights, we had found that there were not sufficient resources within the Secretariat for such activities. Finally, the members of the Committee agreed to use funds earmarked for the travel of the Chairmen of the sanctions Committee for this purpose, on the understanding that an effort would be made to recuperate those funds. On the basis of this experience, I would like to recall the importance of either establishing as soon as possible a flexible mechanism that will enable us to solve these kinds of problems, or directly earmarking resources to enable committees such as mine to move quickly in these cases.

The Committee also authorized the return from Stansted in the United Kingdom of an Ariana Airlines flight that had been hijacked in Afghanistan.

The Committee met with representatives of ICAO and IATA in order to comply with paragraph 6 (f) of the resolution, on granting an exemption under paragraph 4 (b) to the IATA regarding payments to be made to the aeronautical authority of Afghanistan on behalf of international airlines for air traffic control services. The exchange that took place with the representatives of those two institutions was significant. The Committee now expects the presentation of a report this month from ICAO and IATA in order to take action on this matter.

As I said earlier, the Committee is now dealing with paragraph 4 (b), which refers to the freezing of Taliban

funds and other financial resources under its direct or indirect control. The wording of that paragraph, as well as that of paragraph 6 (e), requires the Committee to designate these funds and resources in a similar way as was done with aircraft under paragraph 4 (a).

To that end, the Committee has used as a basis a series of definitions from the second Interlaken seminar on targeted financial sanctions, which was held last March under the auspices of the Swiss Government. We are close to agreement on a text that will contain the designations that we feel would help those States that have not yet done so to comply with paragraph 4 (b) of the resolution. We would hope that once the Committee formally concludes this stage on the subject of designations the Secretariat will — on that basis and pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 1267 (1999) — submit a report containing a series of proposals to improve monitoring of compliance with measures provided for in paragraph 4 (b). We understand that this report is not yet available, as it is subject to the designation referred to in paragraphs 4 (b) and 6 (e), which the Committee is now concluding.

Finally, I wish to point out that the effectiveness and, to some extent, the success of any sanctions regime depend on the level of implementation and compliance with its measures. This is particularly true of targeted sanctions regimes, as is the case with this resolution. As a result, I appeal to all Member States to implement fully resolution 1267 (1999).

I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Argentina.

First of all, I wish to express the satisfaction of the delegation of Argentina at seeing you, Sir, preside over this meeting of the Security Council. Your presence in this Chamber is further proof of the commitment of Canada, a great country of our North American continent, to the United Nations, which has been made clear by the valuable and generous support it has provided to this Organization.

Allow me, Mr. President, to join in the condolences that you expressed on the passing of President Bourguiba, and we extend our most sincere condolences to the delegation of Tunisia.

The delegation of Argentina would like to express its gratitude for the updated information provided by the Secretariat through the report introduced by Mr. Renninger. The situation in Afghanistan is very complex and dramatic, and we feel that it is appropriate to deal with it in the format of an open briefing.

The delegation of Argentina is concerned that the parties to the conflict are preparing to launch new offensives, which would have a negative impact on the already suffering civilian population. It is intolerable that these people should continue to be the victims of violations of human rights and of the most fundamental norms of humanitarian law. In the context of an ongoing rejection of arbitrary detentions, summary executions and forced labour of detainees, we support the deployment of the Civil Affairs Unit of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan when security conditions allow, which does not seem likely any time soon.

The delegation of Argentina therefore condemns the intimidation tactics used by the armed forces of the Taliban against United Nations staff in Kandahar. We appeal to all parties to the conflict to respect international norms relating to the safety of United Nations personnel, related staff and humanitarian staff.

We find the food security situation particularly alarming. It may deteriorate further as a result of the severe drought that is gripping southern Afghanistan. We are alarmed also by the information contained in the most recent report of the Secretary-General regarding the problem of educating girls, the precarious health conditions for the population in general and for children in particular, and the difficult situation of female-headed households. For this reason we are pleased on this occasion to note the presence of Ms. Angela King, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues.

The problem of the manufacturing, stockpiling and trafficking of narcotic drugs is of great concern, and we once again express our condemnation of it. We feel that this scourge fuels the conflict, and we therefore appeal to the parties to show their determination to put an end to it.

We regret that the failure to comply with resolution 1267 (1999) has forced members of the Security Council to continue to implement the measures contained in operative paragraph 4 of that resolution.

For that reason, we urge once again all of the Afghan parties to intensify their efforts to resume diplomatic negotiations and to reject a military solution. We also call urgently on neighbouring countries to stop providing military resources to the warring parties.

Finally, Argentina wishes to express its gratitude for the efforts made by the Secretary-General's Personal Representative, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, and for those being carried out within the framework of the "six plus two" group, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Rome process.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for the kind words he addressed to Canada.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like at the outset to join in conveying condolences to the delegation of Tunisia in connection with the death of President Bourguiba. We would like also to join in thanking Ambassador Chowdhury and the entire delegation of Bangladesh for the work they did in March. In addition, we are pleased to see you, Mr. Minister, preside over the Security Council today.

We have listened with great interest to the briefing provided by Mr. Renninger. We believe that it will help us in our consideration of the matter before us today. We are also grateful to Ambassador Listre for the information on the useful work being done by the Committee he chairs.

The Security Council's consideration today of the situation in Afghanistan is very timely indeed. The Taliban is to blame for the situation in the country in all respects, which is extremely unfortunate and disturbing. The Taliban continues to flagrantly violate resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and apparently has no intention of abandoning its illegal and destructive policies. The Council must react to such developments.

We strongly condemn the continuing escalation by the Taliban of the fighting there, which is postponing still further any hopes for a peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan and which is bringing even greater suffering to the people of that country. We are outraged by the continuing policy of attacks by the Taliban on United Nations personnel, as happened recently in Kandahar.

The Taliban's belief that it can resolve the Afghan problem by force and its claim to ethnic and religious domination of the country are indeed doomed to failure. Only a political settlement, though direct talks between the parties under the auspices of the United Nations, taking account of the interests of all groups and sectors of Afghan society, can put an end to this conflict. It is only by establishing, on the basis of such talks, a broad-based and multi-ethnic government that we can ensure the rights of all Afghan people and that their country can move ahead towards peace, national concord and prosperity.

The Security Council must issue a strong warning to the Taliban about the need to halt preparations for the resumption of a large-scale offensive and to begin serious peace talks. The Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan has more than once expressed its readiness for such talks.

We are seriously disturbed at the increase in outside interference in internal Afghan affairs, particularly by the direct involvement in fighting on the Taliban side of thousands of foreign fighters and mercenaries. We appeal to all neighbours of Afghanistan immediately to take measures to prevent their territories from being used to provide military support to the Afghan parties.

There is growing support by the Taliban for international terrorism and extremism. Russia itself has faced large-scale manifestations of this within its own territory. This kind of problem has arisen for a number of our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and together with them we are taking coordinated action, *inter alia* through establishing a single anti-terrorist centre in the CIS.

Against this backdrop we are particularly disturbed by the Taliban's refusal to comply with the Security Council's demand that it turn over the international terrorist Usama bin Laden, by its open collusion with extremist and terrorist elements operating in territories of other States, and by the training in Taliban-controlled territory of mercenaries to carry out terrorist activities in neighbouring and other countries. Such actions by the leadership of the Taliban represent a blatant challenge to the entire international community and flagrant interference in the internal affairs of other States.

This in itself offers serious grounds for raising the question of tightening the targeted sanctions imposed earlier by the Security Council against the Taliban.

The Security Council must also do more to ensure that the Taliban implement the other demands contained in the Council's resolutions. We are seriously disturbed about the growing drug threat from Afghanistan. According to estimates, up to 40 per cent of the heroin that enters Europe and North America comes from Afghanistan. Incidentally, there are reports that Kosovo is the main channel for drugs moving from Afghanistan into Europe. Drugs from Afghanistan are also moving to

other regions of the world, including central Asia and Russia. In the framework of the "six plus two" group, Russia has actively supported the initiative to coordinate efforts by neighbouring States of Afghanistan to counter this drug threat.

We are grateful to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme for taking practical steps to strengthen the so-called security zone around Afghanistan. We are expecting an increase in assistance to Russian border units that are protecting the Tajik-Afghan border and trying to staunch the flow of drugs across that border. The international community must speak out about the Taliban's continuing disregard of demands for a halt to violations of international humanitarian law and of human rights, including discriminatory policies against women and girls.

The United Nations must continue to play a key role in resolving the situation in Afghanistan. The Security Council must remain constantly aware of the issue of Afghanistan and take necessary measures to help the situation in the country evolve.

We support the work of the new Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Francesc Vendrell, and of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan. We welcome the resumption of the work of the "six plus two" group, which is the main international mechanism helping the United Nations in its efforts to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan. The Organization of the Islamic Conference is doing useful work in coordinating United Nations activities.

We expect the adoption of the agreed draft presidential statement in the Security Council to help ensure better and greater coordination with the international community on all aspects of the Afghanistan problem, in the interests of finding a swift political settlement to the situation there.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to join you, Mr. President, in paying tribute to former President Bourguiba of Tunisia. By attending the funeral tomorrow, President Chirac will express the sentiments and solidarity of all of the people of France, who are united with the people of Tunisia in their grief.

I, too, should like to congratulate Ambassador Chowdhury, and I should like to welcome you, Mr. President, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada, to our Council.

I am grateful to Ambassador Listre for the information that he has given us, and I should also like to thank the Secretariat for providing us with a detailed and comprehensive briefing. The situation in Afghanistan is still extremely disturbing, whether with regard to the continuation of fighting, interference with the work of humanitarian organizations, violations of human rights — in particular, the situation of women — support for international terrorism or the increase in the production of and trafficking in drugs.

In all these areas, the Security Council has already taken a firm position. It will do so again after this meeting through a statement by the President. France fully supports the draft presidential statement to be issued. Indeed, it is important to make clear that that statement reflects the unanimity of the membership of the Council.

Unanimously, we recall the principles for a political settlement in Afghanistan and, in particular, the objective of attaining a fully representative government, acceptable to all. Such a consensus among members of the Council must be highlighted. We hope that the particularly strong message being sent to the Afghan parties, in particular the Taliban, will be heard and acted upon.

I should like to make two specific comments. First, with regard to the military situation, hostilities have resumed, and members of the Council have already expressed concern about the offensive launched by the Taliban at the beginning of March. My delegation is particularly worried about the involvement of foreign elements in the fighting that is taking place. The Secretariat has just stressed the fact that several thousand foreigners are involved in the military operations, most of them fighting on the side of the Taliban. My delegation therefore fully supports the appeal by the Security Council for a halt to such outside interference.

My second comment relates to the political prospects. France fully supports the current efforts being made by the new Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vendrell, aimed at achieving a political settlement. I am referring to his participation in recent meetings organized by the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Jeddah. Here, I should like to

emphasize that the Rome process, which was launched at the end of last year with a view to convening a *loya jirgah*, or grand assembly, is very important. We believe that this peace initiative, coming from Afghan civil society, deserves special attention. The advocates of this initiative have decided to send delegations to the belligerent parties to encourage them to join in that effort at reconciliation. We believe that it would be useful for the Secretariat to consider ways of getting all the Afghan parties to support that initiative.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I am particularly honoured to be here today, under your presidency, Sir, at this important meeting, and I am delighted that you intend to spend so much of the month of Canada's presidency of the Security Council with us here in New York. We greatly look forward to working under your leadership. I also want to express my very high regard for Ambassador Fowler and the entire Canadian delegation for presiding over this "month of human security" and, in particular, for their immense efforts with regard to the Angola sanctions issue, which I know we will be discussing later in the month, and to which we in our Government are also devoting so much attention in support of their efforts.

I would also like to thank John Renninger of the Department for Political Affairs and the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Angela King, for drawing our attention to the plight of women and girls in Afghanistan, particularly in the 1997 report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Gender Mission to Afghanistan. I would also like to thank my friend Ambassador Arnoldo Listre for his superb work as Chairman of the Security Council's Taliban sanctions Committee and for his report today, and to thank Ambassador Chowdhury again for his presidency of the Security Council last month.

I would like also to join other members in expressing our special sympathy to the people of Tunisia in connection with the passing of President Bourguiba. He was an immense figure in the world. I remember very clearly, as early as the early 1960s, his enormous impact on public thinking in the United States. He was one of the very first leaders of both Africa and the Arab world to bring to the attention of the American people, and of the world, the emerging desires of the peoples of Africa and of the Maghreb — an area for which I have special affection — for justice, democracy and human rights. We will always remember him for his courageous stands in support of tolerance and understanding within the Arab world and between the Arabs and the rest of the world, and on behalf of North Africa, and all of Africa. I shall be at the Tunisian embassy at the earliest possible moment to join my colleagues in signing the condolence book.

Afghanistan is obviously one of the great horror stories of the world today. It is a vexing and tragic mosaic of suffering, and its seemingly endless civil war exacerbates an already dire humanitarian situation, as we heard in the briefing this morning. It is draining resources that could be used to alleviate privation, and it is preventing the people of Afghanistan from reaching their full potential. Also, the conditions of lawlessness and disorder that now exist allow terrorism and the trade in illegal narcotics to flourish.

The promotion of human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls, is among our highest priorities today. In his recent millennium report (A/54/2000), the Secretary-General reminded us that protecting the well-being of women and children, particularly in areas of conflict, will be one of the greatest challenges facing the United Nations in this century. As Hillary Rodham Clinton, one of my own country's greatest leaders in the effort to protect the rights of women and girls around the globe and to empower them, said last December at the White House, abuses of fundamental freedoms "are not customs. They are not religious practices. They are human rights violations".

The United States continues to press all Afghan factions, especially the Taliban and their supporters, to protect and nurture the basic freedoms of all Afghans, particularly women and girls. When we talk to the Taliban — and we do — we stress our continued desire to see improvement in this area.

Our human rights report, issued last month, paints a regrettably grim picture. In addition to the treatment of women and girls, there are unacceptable abuses of civilians in general. The human development index of the United Nations Development Programme ranks Afghanistan among the world's lowest, while the gender disparity index, based on female life expectancy, education and income, ranks Afghanistan dead last.

But due to the efforts of the United Nations and the community of non-governmental organizations, the situation is not hopeless. There are signs of modest improvement, at least in informal opportunities for girls, even if our best information suggests that this remains spotty and fragile. Somewhat more encouraging is a trend

towards improved access to medical treatment for women and girls, at least in Kabul.

Regrettably, the Taliban's official policies remain unchanged. It is therefore primarily the United Nations and the international community of non-governmental organizations that can claim credit for what little progress has been made. This brings to mind the words and the work of Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the first leaders of the United Nations who, as chairwoman of the Human Rights Commission, helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She reminded us that it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

In noting the work of the United Nations, I would like to ask Ms. King, the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, about the restrictions on the public role of women in Afghanistan. What can we do to encourage the Afghan regime to allow women to vote, to seek employment, to organize themselves and to work for better treatment, in order to gain their appropriate place in civil society?

Last year, United States humanitarian aid to the Afghan people totaled over $70 million, making the United States the world's single largest aid provider to Afghanistan. Over half the United States contribution, $44 million, was in the form of wheat or flour distributed through the United Nations and the World Food Programme. Of the cash component, more than $3 million was for educational and other programmes specifically targeted to help women and girls, mainly refugees in Pakistan. This year's effort will be of comparable magnitude.

We have expanded United States support for the resettlement programme for persecuted Afghans. These cases are referred by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and administered by the United States Department of State. We expect to welcome about 1,500 Afghan women and their families this year. Nearly 300 were resettled here under this programme last year. We call on other nations to step forward to accept a share of the responsibility to provide refuge to Afghans, joining Pakistan, which hosts by far the largest number on its territory, and Iran, another major country of refuge.

We are committed to supporting these efforts, and we insist that all Afghan factions, particularly the Taliban, support them as well. We want more than tacit, grudging acceptance of reforms. Humanitarian operations in Afghanistan must be allowed to proceed unhindered. Afghan parties have an obligation to protect humanitarian and other international personnel. Violations of this obligation, such as the searches of United Nations offices in Kandahar by Taliban militia on 26, 27 and 29 March, are simply unacceptable. The responsibility for the subsequent withdrawal of United Nations international staff from Kandahar and the suspension of humanitarian assistance activities in southern Afghanistan rests solely with the Taliban.

Terrorism, narcotics and Afghanistan's continuing civil war also demand attention. The efforts of the international community to persuade the Taliban to stop supporting international terrorism complement, rather than conflict with, our humanitarian interest in Afghanistan. We must remember that United Nations sanctions as set out in resolution 1267 (1999) were carefully crafted to target only the Taliban, not the innocent people and certainly not the women and girls of Afghanistan. The Taliban must comply with the demand of resolution 1267 (1999) that Usama bin Laden be turned over to authorities in a country where he will be brought to justice. So long as Usama bin Laden enjoys safe haven in Afghanistan, the international community is at risk, as illustrated by the recently disrupted terrorist plot in Jordan. I would like to highlight the obligation of all Member States under resolution 1267 (1999) to implement sanctions on Taliban assets and flights effectively and promptly.

Narcotics is also a serious concern. Last year, Afghanistan became the world's largest producer of opium. This is almost entirely consumed outside Afghanistan's borders, making the threat from illicit narcotics an international issue of serious magnitude. We have noted recent reports that the Taliban have eradicated some poppy in Afghanistan and hope this means that such efforts will be undertaken on a larger scale. We encourage the efforts of the "six plus two" group of Afghanistan's neighbours plus Russia and the United States in working towards solutions to these problems. We also need donor cooperation and support. And we look forward to the upcoming Vienna meeting of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

The United States continues to believe that the Afghanistan tragedy can be settled only through negotiations aimed at finding a solution accommodating the rights and interests of all Afghans. In this regard, we welcome the work of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative. We appreciate the recent efforts

to promote peace, including the Rome process and the Cyprus group. But more must be done.

In conclusion, let me say that the United States remains committed to helping forge solutions to the many pressing problems of Afghanistan. We must work together to alleviate the suffering of innocents, particularly those, like women and girls, who are disproportionately harmed. Let us pledge to continue and strengthen our efforts to achieve positive results in these endeavours.

I thank you, Mr. President, for your presence at this important meeting today.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to Canada and to its delegation.

Mr. Ahmed (Bangladesh): The Bangladesh delegation wishes to join others in expressing our sincere condolences to the delegation of Tunisia on the sad demise of former President Habib Bourguiba.

Let me also begin by joining previous speakers in commending the Canadian presidency of the Council for convening this open briefing on Afghanistan. Our sincere thanks go to you, Sir, for your very warm words and to previous speakers for the warm sentiments they expressed towards Ambassador Chowdhury and his team and for Bangladesh's presidency of the Council last month.

We also appreciate the briefing provided by the Secretariat for a second time, further to the 10 March report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan. We should also like to pay our compliments to Ambassador Listre for his excellent presentation on the work of the sanctions Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1267 (1999).

Bangladesh believes that there is no alternative to a comprehensive political settlement of the existing situation in Afghanistan and that will mean the formation of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and representative Government. It is regrettable, however, that not much progress has so far been achieved as regards narrowing the differences among the parties on the establishment of such a Government. We commend the continued efforts of Mr. Francesc Vendrell, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General on Afghanistan, to bring the warring parties to the path of negotiation and to maintain consultations with the Governments in the region, including the "six plus two" group.

The threat of resumption of a large-scale military offensive in Afghanistan, as confirmed by the assessment of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA), remains a matter of serious concern. The Council strongly deplored the outbreak of fighting last month between the forces of the Taliban and the United Front in the northern Kunduz province and north of Kabul around the Bagram air base. The Secretary-General in his report has mentioned that the flow of weapons and war-making materials into Afghanistan has continued throughout the winter, enabling both sides to prepare for fresh spring offensives. The foremost need, therefore, is to concentrate all efforts to persuade the parties to enter into a process of dialogue that may lead to a verifiable cease-fire and eventually to an agreement on the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative Government. Such an endeavour can be effectively complemented by the immediate and complete cessation of the flow of arms and military supplies to the warring parties in Afghanistan from outside.

We are deeply disturbed that the United Nations had to withdraw its international staff from the Kandahar office following repeated incursions onto United Nations premises by the Taliban security forces, in violation of formal agreements between the parties. We join others in expressing in clear and categorical terms our disapproval of such violations of the safety and immunity of the United Nations and its personnel. We demand that conditions be created to enable the return of the international staff of the United Nations office in Kandahar.

The humanitarian consequences of the long, drawn-out war in Afghanistan need no elaboration. We are seriously concerned at the disastrous socio-economic conditions in Afghanistan severely affecting its people, due to and exacerbated by unending fighting. Civilians are targeted deliberately, their assets destroyed, their homes subjected to widespread burning and looting. Women and children have become particularly vulnerable in such worsening socio-economic conditions. There has been little progress in the education sector in general and for girls in particular.

The health conditions for many Afghans remain extremely precarious, with reports of significant increases in acute respiratory infectious diseases causing at least 25 per cent of child mortality in the war-ravaged country. There are disturbing reports of a wide range of human

rights violations, such as summary executions, arbitrary detention and forced labour for detainees.

The magnitude of the humanitarian problem is overwhelming when we consider the more than 2.5 million displaced Afghans who still remain in Pakistan and Iran. We hope the repatriation process that started towards the end of last month will continue, with the refugees returning voluntarily, in safety and with dignity. We will also hope that the returning refugees will receive the necessary international assistance.

The United Nations has and should continue to play a central role in the international efforts to achieve a lasting settlement of the Afghan crisis. We hope that this important role will be further strengthened and complemented by the other ongoing initiatives on the Afghan question. The United Nations agencies are doing a commendable job in reaching the affected Afghan people. The Secretary-General has reported the severe food security situation in Kabul, the central highlands, Badakhshan, Ghowr and Kandahar. We hope that relevant agencies, such as the World Food Programme and others, will intensify their efforts to address this vital need and we call upon all concerned in Afghanistan to provide unimpeded access to these agencies. Similar access should also be ensured to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) when these agencies launch a national immunization drive for children against polio in Afghanistan in early May and early June.

Bangladesh supports the draft presidential statement on Afghanistan which will be adopted by the Council later today.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, we wish like other countries to convey our condolences to the Republic of Tunisia on the passing of its former President.

We also wish to congratulate the delegation of Bangladesh for its excellent work last month in the presidency of the Council.

We thank the Secretariat for its briefing and the Ambassador of Argentina for his report on the work of the sanctions Committee.

We are pleased to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada, Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, presiding over our meeting today.

The Chinese delegation wishes to express its deep regret and disappointment over the continuing conflict in Afghanistan. We believe that the current situation there is very precarious. The Taliban and the United Front are expanding their forces in the North in preparation for war and sporadic fighting continues in some areas. Now that spring is here, if the factions in Afghanistan are unable to resume negotiations soon, that country will very likely be witness to a large-scale military offensive. We therefore thank the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs for convening this open briefing today, which was clearly very necessary and timely.

Following decades of war, the people of Afghanistan long for an end to the fighting and instability and for a peaceful life. Military means can never offer a solution to their problems. Only the establishment of a broad-based representative Government can promote peace in Afghanistan.

The Chinese delegation greatly appreciates the diplomatic efforts made by the newly appointed Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vendrell, since assuming his post and supports the good offices of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and other actors towards a political settlement of the question of Afghanistan. We believe that the international community should work hard to break the vicious yearly cycle in which the Afghan factions negotiate in winter and fight in the spring. We urge all sides concerned, including the "six plus two" group and especially the neighbouring countries with strong influence over the factions in Afghanistan, to work towards that end. China will actively participate in the peace efforts of the "six plus two" group.

Illicit drug production in and trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan have caused serious damage to many countries. As has happened in other areas, drugs have become a means of maintaining warfare. This problem should be a matter of great concern to the international community. We highly appreciate the efforts made by the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention.

We are deeply disturbed by the deterioration in the humanitarian and human rights situations in Afghanistan. Long-term war has rendered Afghanistan one of the most tragic areas of the world. Most unacceptable is that civilians have become targets of attack. Afghan people, especially women and girls, have experienced exceptionally serious difficulties. We strongly urge all the

factions in Afghanistan to implement their commitments to effectively ensure the security and safety of the United Nations and international assistance personnel so that the international community can provide humanitarian assistance to the abandoned people of Afghanistan.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to Canada.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I join you, Mr. President, and other speakers in expressing our condolences to the delegation of Tunisia on the passing away of former President Bourguiba. I also join other speakers in expressing our delight at seeing you, Sir, back in the chair.

I thank Mr. Renninger for his briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and Ambassador Listre for his information on the activities of the sanctions Committee. I further welcome Ms. Angela King, whose expertise in gender issues is clearly indispensable when we are dealing with a country like Afghanistan.

My delegation condemns the latest offensives, and we are gravely concerned at the military build-up and the preparations for further large-scale offensives by the parties.

It remains our conviction that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. Trying to settle the dispute by military means prolongs the conflict, carries the risk of further regionalization and increases the suffering of the Afghan people, and it will not contribute to a process of reconciliation in the future. No one can win this war, but all can destroy the country.

The warring parties are responsible for finding a political solution that will end the suffering of the Afghan people. We appeal to them to stop the fighting and return to the negotiating table. It is of the utmost importance that the neighbouring countries strictly adhere to the Tashkent Declaration, in particular to the commitment not to provide military support to any Afghan party and to prevent the use of their territories for such purposes.

The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan remains alarming. The offensive of the Taliban on 1 March this year has led to another stream of displaced persons, and once again women and children were the primary victims. The civilian population is becoming ever more destitute and desperate, and the future of Afghanistan as a country looks bleaker by the day.

For many people in Afghanistan international humanitarian assistance is a lifeline. We are therefore deeply concerned about the forced entries by Taliban armed groups into the United Nations premises in Kandahar, which compelled the United Nations to withdraw its international staff from that city and resulted in the suspension of humanitarian assistance in southern Afghanistan.

The rigid social code imposed by the Taliban results in many restrictions for women and girls, for example with regard to employment, education and health care services. The restrictions most acutely affect educated women in the cities, but their impact is also felt by poor, uneducated women, their children and other family members. Eventually this cannot fail to have a negative influence on the prospects for development in Afghanistan.

There are even more alarming consequences of publicly accepted discrimination against women. My delegation strongly condemns the way in which over the years many Afghan women and girls have become victims of gender-specific human rights violations, such as rape, assault, forced marriage and prostitution. Violence against women and girls sometimes seems to be used as an instrument of intimidation and humiliation of entire population groups.

The exclusion of women from services is not an innocent, culturally determined idiosyncrasy. In a country where on average 10 people are killed or injured by exploding landmines every day, it is, of course, criminal to exclude women from mine-awareness training.

Although we recognize recent signs of modest relaxation of Taliban rules on access of women and girls to certain services, and while we also note that there are regional differences in the interpretation and observance of these rules, the exclusion of girls from education remains of grave concern to my delegation. It should be kept in mind that it is not just the education of girls that is affected by these restrictions, for a very large part of the teaching corps in Afghanistan used to consist of women. Due to employment restrictions on women, education for boys is stagnating as well. Again, this results in a weakening of the prospects for social and economic development.

In other words, Afghanistan is experiencing a humanitarian emergency, and once more women and children are the most vulnerable group. Over the years,

the Netherlands has generously contributed to humanitarian assistance to the country on the understanding that it should be equally accessible to men and women and special attention should be paid to the position of women and girls. But international assistance cannot undo the damage caused by the marginalization of half the population. We therefore appeal to the Taliban to bring their rules on access to employment, education and health care services more into line with those of the international community, including the rest of the Islamic world.

The President: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his very kind words.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): My delegation joins you, Mr. President, and other members of the Security Council in conveying our profound sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the delegation of Tunisia on the passing away of President Bourguiba. His selfless contribution to the struggle for freedom and independence for the peoples of Africa will be remembered by future generations. His death is not only a loss to Tunisia, but to Africa as a whole.

Let me join others in expressing my delegation's appreciation to see you, Mr. President. We welcome you to our meeting this morning.

The magnitude of the suffering of the people of Afghanistan because of the war is comparable to that of situations in Africa. It is therefore important that we continue to seek solutions to achieve peace in Afghanistan.

I also want to thank Mr. Renninger for his very comprehensive briefing this morning.

Our thanks go also to Ambassador Listre for the recent report and for the information about the work of the sanctions Committee. We are of the view that his delegation is doing a commendable job in attending to the work of the Committee.

My delegation welcomes the slowdown in fighting between the two factions in Afghanistan after the recent offensives. We trust that this situation will continue, to allow for uninterrupted humanitarian assistance. However, we are concerned at reports about preparations for renewed fighting by the parties. The report before us is very clear about the devastating effects of the war on civilians — especially women and children — who already have to battle other extreme elements, such as harsh winter conditions.

We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the country, and we condemn the violations of human rights perpetrated against civilians. In particular we condemn and reject all discriminatory practices and restrictions against women and girls by the Taliban. We therefore welcome the continuing efforts by the United Nations — and in particular by the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General — to find a lasting political solution to the Afghan conflict.

My delegation remains of the view that only a negotiated political settlement aimed at the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative Government acceptable to all Afghans can lead to peace and national reconciliation. In this regard, we welcome the renewed commitment of members of the "six plus two" group to contribute to the peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. Furthermore, we welcome the efforts made by other parties — such as the recent peace talks in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, which were arranged by the Organization of the Islamic Conference — as well as other initiatives to promote peace in Afghanistan.

With regard to drug cultivation and production activities in Afghanistan, my delegation is particularly struck by and concerned about the magnitude of the problem and the role it plays in the continuation of the conflict. We therefore welcome the efforts made by the United Nations through the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, as well as the initiatives by the "six plus two" group, to curtail the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan.

Finally, my delegation supports the draft presidential statement that was submitted by the Russian delegation.

The President: I thank the representative of Namibia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I should like to join in the condolences that have been expressed by other members of the Council to the delegation of Tunisia on the death of President Bourguiba, and also in the congratulations that have been expressed to the President, and others around the Council table today. It is a great pleasure to see you here, Mr. President. Your commitment to the United Nations, and to the Security Council in particular, is much appreciated and welcomed by the United Kingdom.

I should also like to thank Ambassador Listre for the cooperation that he has extended to us as Chairman of the Afghan sanctions Committee over the various troubling experiences that we have had to trouble the Committee with over the last few weeks.

I should like straightaway to say how much the United Kingdom deplored the recent forced entry by Taliban armed groups into United Nations premises in Kandahar on 26, 27 and 29 March, and the consequent intimidation of United Nations personnel. The Taliban must recognize that their actions fall well short of internationally accepted norms of behaviour. We call on them to stop such practices and urge them to guarantee the safety of United Nations and other international personnel in Afghanistan. Such actions completely undermine their arguments for recognition by the international community.

It was clear from Personal Representative Vendrell's briefing to the Council on 28 March, and from what Mr. Renninger has said today, that the long-suffering people of Afghanistan are in for another summer of misery. Fighting has already resumed. Both protagonists are preparing for new offensives, but a military victory is not possible. An obvious contribution to improving the humanitarian and human rights situation would be the advent of peace. A ceasefire, followed by a negotiated settlement leading to a broad-based Government, is the best solution. The United Nations has a crucial role in brokering this; hence our dismay at the violation of United Nations immunity in Kandahar and our concern at what Mr. Renninger has said today about external interference. We call again for an end to the outside interference, which lessens considerably the chances of peace in Afghanistan.

We continue to support United Nations efforts to facilitate a solution in Afghanistan, and we urge a redoubling of the efforts by the "six plus two" group.

The United Kingdom is deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Afghanistan, and particularly as it affects women and girls. As Mr. Renninger has said, the litany of discrimination against them is all too familiar: restrictions on access to health care, education and employment outside the home, restrictions on freedom of movement, restrictions on their freedom from intimidation, harassment and violence. The report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan highlights further, yet more disturbing, violations of the human rights of Afghan women and children last year. We have also noted an emerging trend of deliberate targeting of civilians by the various combatants. This violates any number of international norms. It is simply unacceptable, and it cannot and should not be tolerated.

We urge all factions — in particular the Taliban, who must bear primary responsibility — to end immediately all human rights violations against women and children, to repeal all discriminatory legislation and measures and to ensure the full and equal participation of women and girls in civil society, as well as their full access to health care and education. We have pointed out to the Taliban — and this I think is a particularly telling point — that other Islamic societies accord more rights to women.

We have noted reports of some improvement in the access for women and girls to health care and education. We welcome any positive developments, but these moves are nowhere near enough. Their continues to be a yawning gap between the promises and actions, particularly by the Taliban. We need as a Council to consider how we can close that gap.

The United Kingdom will continue to make these points in our contacts with the factions. We support the United Nations fully in its humanitarian efforts.

In pursuing its own programme of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people, the United Kingdom actively participates in the principled programming approach under the United Nations-led strategic framework for Afghanistan. This approach is designed to ensure that assistance works towards the eradication of any form of discrimination, including gender discrimination.

As the Council will know, the United Kingdom provides funding for the Islamabad-based United Nations gender adviser post. We would be interested in an assessment of the activities of the Adviser and how they might be developed further.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his very forthright statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Mali extends its condolences to the people of Tunisia in connection with the death of President Bourguiba and associates itself fully with the tribute that you, Sir, paid to him at the beginning of this meeting. I would like also to express my delegation's satisfaction at

seeing you preside over this meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in Afghanistan.

Let me thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and detailed report. I am grateful also to Ambassador Listre for the report he presented in his capacity as Chairman of the sanctions Committee, and to Mr. Renninger for updating the information provided by the Secretariat.

I should like first of all to express our serious concern over the continuing conflict in Afghanistan, which is bringing such terrible suffering to the civilian population of that country and which poses a serious and growing threat to regional and international peace and security. We condemn the new offensives by the Taliban and are disturbed by reports that arms and other war *matériel* are continuing to enter Afghanistan, thereby allowing the two parties to prepare their spring offensive. Given the situation, we believe that the Council should demand that the fighting be halted. The parties must be convinced to hold talks with a view to a verifiable and lasting ceasefire.

My second comment relates to the quest for a solution to the conflict. The Afghan parties must understand that there is no military solution to the Afghan conflict. Only a negotiated political settlement aimed at the establishment of a multi-ethnic and fully representative government acceptable to all Afghans will lead to peace and national reconciliation. Accordingly, we support the efforts of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to bring the Afghan parties together at Jeddah, and we encourage the "six plus two" group in its efforts to revitalize that process. We believe also that peace initiatives by the non-belligerent Afghan parties, such as the Rome, Cyprus and Tokyo processes, should also be supported. In this context, the United Nations must continue to play a central and impartial role.

My third comment relates to the critical humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. It is difficult to get assistance delivered; the critical situation of many civilians is intensifying; the number of displaced persons has increased; there is food insecurity for the majority of Afghans; and many people are in a very precarious situation. It is thus imperative that the Afghan parties, particularly the Taliban, take the necessary measures to ensure the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies to all those in need, and they must stop interfering with the activities of the United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations. We welcome the efforts of neighbouring countries for the freely-agreed-to repatriation of Afghans who are currently in their territory, and we encourage them to continue providing aid and protection when necessary.

Fourthly, with respect to the human rights situation in Afghanistan, we deem unacceptable the forced displacement of civilians, summary executions, arbitrary detention and forced labour, restrictions on the mobility of women and girls, the recruitment of child soldiers and all violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law.

Fifthly, Mali strongly supports the resolve of the Security Council to combat terrorism.

My sixth and last comment relates to illicit drug production and trafficking in general and within the context of Afghanistan. As the Secretary-General stressed in his report, we believe this question should be dealt with in a coordinated manner to put an end to the illicit production of drugs in Afghanistan and their illicit trafficking from Afghan territory through the implementation of a detailed and balanced regional plan of action. In this respect, we welcome the major role played by the United Nations Office on Drug Control and Crime Prevention, and we commend the invaluable work of the "six plus two" group in that connection.

The presidential statement we will be adopting at the end of this meeting covers all of these aspects and contains a strong, clear and consistent message, which my delegation fully endorses.

In conclusion, I should like to commend Mr. Vendrell of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and the international humanitarian organizations for their efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Mali for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Kamal (Malaysia): I too would like to join those who spoke before me in conveying our deepest sympathy and condolences to the delegation of Tunisia on the demise of President Bourguiba.

We wish also to congratulate you, Sir, and your delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month, and we would like to thank Ambassador Chowdhury and the delegation of Bangladesh for guiding the Council's work last month to a successful conclusion.

My delegation would like once again to welcome Minister Axworthy to preside over this very important and timely meeting. We express our appreciation to Canada for convening this formal meeting of the Council on the issue of Afghanistan. The immediate aim of the international community is to undertake the difficult task of providing humanitarian relief to the long-suffering Afghan people, who are caught in an armed-conflict situation. Its longer-term aim is, of course, to work towards a political resolution of the Afghan problem and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of that war-torn country.

We would like also to thank Ambassador Listre for his briefing just now and for the work he has accomplished in his capacity as Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Afghanistan. We thank also Mr. John Renninger, Officer-in-Charge, Asia and the Pacific Division, Department of Political Affairs, for his insightful briefing.

We would also like to take this opportunity to commend the work done by the former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi. The peace settlement that has eluded us is not for want of effort or initiative on his part. It is a reflection of the complex nature of the problem, which revolves around the seemingly irreconcilable differences of the various warring factions and is intertwined with the geo-strategic interests of Afghanistan's neighbours. We would like to extend our full support to Mr. Francesc Vendrell, the newly appointed Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA), as he takes up his challenging appointment and attempts to hammer out a negotiated settlement under the auspices of the United Nations.

The heavy toll exacted on Afghanistan and its people following the long and debilitating war weighs heavily on the mind of the international community. This impoverished country can ill afford to squander its scarce resources on the war effort. As a result, Afghanistan has been consigned to the backwaters of economic development, with dire consequences for the long-suffering Afghans, regardless of their ethnicity and political orientation.

Among the debilitating effects of the armed conflict in Afghanistan is the fact that vast tracts of the country have been sown with landmines that have claimed many lives and limbs. It is estimated that about 10 million landmines have been laid in Afghanistan, making it the most heavily mined country in the world. Such is the legacy bequeathed by the belligerents of the most recent Afghan war. This is further compounded by other social ills, not the least of which are the pernicious effects of drugs, guns and violence and the fact that an entire population is dependent on handouts from the international community. In addition to these ills are the catastrophic effects related to the so-called internally displaced persons, who are, in fact, refugees in their own country as a result of the long war, exacerbating an already grave humanitarian situation.

We are also mindful of the effects of the protracted war on the children of the land — the lost generation that is growing up with no memory of life in a peaceful state — many of whom are illiterate. Thousands of children die each year from malnutrition, respiratory infections and other diseases. Children are by no means the only vulnerable sector of society. The maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world.

Malaysia is totally against practices of gender discrimination. It is deplorable that Afghan women have been denied their right to education, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report. This right, as well as the right to earn a living and to enjoy participation in other facets of life, are very much compatible with Islam, which promotes such rights. We believe that women have the legitimate right and obligation to play a constructive role in society, including in the realm of nation-building.

We commend the Canadian presidency for making human security the thrust of this month's deliberations. In this regard, the Taliban's recent intrusions into United Nations premises in Kandahar, in violation of the inviolable United Nations principle of diplomatic immunity, is to be deplored. The incident dramatized the risks faced by well-meaning humanitarian workers in the performance of their duties in areas of armed conflict. The subsequent withdrawal of international staff, including the non-governmental organizations, has set back relief efforts in an already difficult environment. We recall the murder in 1998 of Lieutenant-Colonel Carmine Calo of Italy, an UNSMA official, as well as other, Afghan employees of the United Nations. We pay tribute to them for their sacrifices in the service of mankind.

My delegation deeply regrets the lack of progress made by the Taliban in bringing to justice those responsible for the murder of the Iranian diplomats and journalist in Mazar-e Sharif in August 1998. We are dismayed at the apparent lack of cooperation extended by the Taliban to the United Nations.

We reaffirm our belief that a durable peace can be achieved only through political negotiations and not by military means. We therefore strongly support efforts, under the auspices of the United Nations, for a negotiated settlement through dialogue and the formation of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative government. In this regard, we strongly encourage early follow-up to the Organization of the Islamic Conference meeting in Jeddah and the Rome process.

It is incumbent upon the Afghan parties to recognize that the search for peace must start with a sustained political will to reach a negotiated settlement, free from external influence. It is regrettable that, despite the lofty principles of the Tashkent Declaration, external military support continues to be received by the contending Afghan parties, thereby fuelling the war indefinitely.

It is clear that the people of Afghanistan are weary of the war and wish to end the cycle of violence as soon as possible so that they can pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. It is imperative that the country's major ethnic and religious groups cooperate among themselves to decide on their own leadership rather than have one imposed on them. In this regard, we are of the view that the Rome process — that is, the convening of the grand assembly, or *loya jirgah*, which is the embodiment of this mechanism — should be encouraged, as it can contribute to the overall peace process.

Barely six months after sanctions were imposed on the Taliban, we are beginning to hear talk about further measures to be imposed on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Sanctions, when imposed as a matter of necessity, must have certain safeguards so as to mitigate the unintended consequences on the civilian population. Therefore, before additional measures can be considered, it is imperative for the Council to evaluate the impact of the ongoing sanctions. We wish to remind the Council that, contrary to requirements, there was no analysis made of the possible impact of sanctions before they were imposed on the Taliban. In the absence of that pre-assessment of the impact of the sanctions, it is important that periodic impact assessments be carried out, as provided for in paragraph 6 (c) of resolution 1267 (1999), which the Council unanimously adopted. This provides the Council with the ability to modify the sanctions regime if and when it is deemed necessary to do so.

The ongoing war has contributed to continuing human rights violations, sustained interference by foreign Powers and far-reaching environmental damage, not to mention the staggering social cost of the long civil war. Afghanistan has become the world's largest producer of illicit drugs. These developments raise serious questions about the commitment of Afghan groups themselves and that of their external supporters to a peaceful resolution of the debilitating conflict. The extent of the humanitarian catastrophe is perhaps more pervasive than we really know. It is imperative, therefore, that every effort be made to ameliorate the plight of the people and to find an early political solution to the conflict.

The President: I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): I would like to join my colleagues in expressing deepest condolences to the delegation of Tunisia on the passing of former President Bourguiba.

My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council at this very important meeting. We are aware of the important place that issues of human security occupy in the foreign policy of your country. The problems of the protection of civilians in armed conflict, humanitarian relief programmes for refugees and the protection of women, children and the elderly, who suffer most during conflict, have become an integral part of the Council's agenda due, in part, to the efforts of Canadian diplomacy and of your delegation here in New York. We are convinced, Mr. Foreign Minister, that your personal participation in the work of the Council during this month will provide a fresh outlook to our deliberations on this and other important issues.

During recent decades, the international community has gained bitter experience and seen proof that the primary harmful impact of any armed conflict is on the most vulnerable parts of society. On the other hand, ongoing human suffering is a contributing factor to instability and further conflict. The current situation in Afghanistan is yet further proof of this.

Last month, in informal consultations, the Council thoroughly examined the situation in Afghanistan, including mediation efforts and prospects for the peace process, as well as drug-trafficking-related problems and their impact on the whole region. Today's additional emphasis on the humanitarian aspects of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, together with the very informative briefings by Ambassador Listre and by Mr. Renniger, enable our deliberations to be comprehensive.

We note with great concern that the general situation in Afghanistan and the humanitarian situation in particular continue to deteriorate. The Secretary-General's report provides an alarming picture of the Taliban's continued policy of flagrant violations of human rights, maltreatment of the civilian population, forced displacements, summary executions, deliberate abuses and arbitrary detentions, violence and continuing discrimination against girls and women, separation of men from their families and the use of child soldiers. The international community has several times expressed its grave concern over such practices and has condemned them.

Unfortunately, no signs of improvement in the current situation can be seen, and the prospects are rather bleak, considering reports that both parties are preparing to resume fighting. The result of that could be easily foreseen: new heavy losses of human life, increased suffering by the civilian population, new flows of refugees and internally displaced persons, destruction and a further decline in the social sphere and in the economy of the country — which is practically non-existent. Needless to say, the hostilities create insuperable difficulties for the implementation of the international community's humanitarian programmes in that country and pose a threat to international humanitarian personnel.

Here I would like to stress that we need to use all possible means at our disposal to respond properly to the test created by the conflict in Afghanistan in order to bring the parties to peaceful reconciliation and to provide a safe and secure environment for the civilian population.

We are thus convinced that it is very timely to reiterate strongly the Council's position with regard to the situation in Afghanistan. We welcome the draft presidential statement, which conveys the Council's grave concern at the current situation in various fields. It contains a clear and resolute demand that the Taliban cease its abuses of human rights, including the rights of women and girls; halt fighting and hostilities; start negotiations with the aim of achieving peaceful reconciliation; stop rendering support to international terrorism; and comply without delay with resolution 1267 (1999). It also carries the important message that further non-compliance by the Taliban will leave the Security Council with no choice other than to consider the imposition of further targeted measures. We thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for its initiative and its efforts in the preparation of a comprehensive document.

Finally, we once again urge the Afghan parties to cease hostilities. We also urge the members of the "six plus two" group and other mediators to resume their efforts to find a way leading to a final solution to the conflict in Afghanistan.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for the very kind words he addressed to the Canadian delegation.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): The Jamaican delegation joins in expressing condolences to the Government and the people of Tunisia on the passing of former President Bourguiba. He was indeed an icon of the developing world.

At this, our first formal meeting for the month of April, allow me on behalf of the Jamaican delegation to say how pleased we are to see you, Sir, the Foreign Minister of Canada, presiding over the deliberations of the Security Council. My delegation would like to express its appreciation to Ambassador Chowdhury and to the delegation of Bangladesh for the efficient way in which the work of the Council was conducted during the month of March.

We welcome to the Council Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General. We thank Mr. John Renninger for briefing us on this very important issue, and we also thank Ambassador Listre for his report on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999).

The humanitarian situation and the plight of vulnerable populations in areas of conflict require our vigilant attention. In this instance, the situation has become chronic, and my delegation wishes to place on record its deep concern at the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Achieving a political settlement of the conflict is the first step towards alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Jamaica therefore reiterates the call for a negotiated political settlement to this conflict. It is important that the parties continue dialogue which could lead to the creation of a broad-based coalition government representative of the various ethnic and religious groups. It is critical for this process that the Taliban take its seat at the negotiating table. We believe that the future of Afghanistan lies in this approach.

It is our firm view that the humanitarian efforts of the United Nations must be supported, and that the

necessary resources must be allocated to deal with the crisis that has emerged. We are also concerned about the difficulties that humanitarian agencies face in gaining access to the most vulnerable members of the population. The deplorable activities of the Taliban have led to the withdrawal of international staff from Kandahar, and we call on the Taliban and on all other parties to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel working in Afghanistan. My delegation takes this opportunity to commend the efforts of United Nations personnel, who remain dedicated in the most challenging of circumstances.

We reiterate our position that there must be respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, and we feel that those who target civilians and individuals who are most vulnerable must be brought to justice in order to deter gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The continued violation of human rights in Afghanistan is of great concern to us, especially with regard to the treatment of women and girls. The problems they face are very well known, and include restricted access to education, restricted access to employment outside the home and inadequate access to proper health care. They also suffer from depression and stress due to social displacement, and from increased impoverishment as a result of more than 20 years of conflict. These problems affect the entire population, but have a greater impact on the most powerless members of the society.

We have heard reports of some minor improvements in the treatment of women and girls, and in that regard we would appreciate it if the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Angela King, could elaborate on the following: first, the likelihood of further progress being made in the conditions of women and girls; secondly, the steps being taken to safeguard the human rights of Afghan women, including those guilty of human rights violations to justice; thirdly, the existence of programmes designed to promote awareness of human rights among Afghan women; and fourthly, the status of the implementation of recommendations made by United Nations organizations geared towards improving the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

We are extremely concerned about the Afghan drug trade and the debilitating effects it has on the population, and about the resulting deterioration of the social fabric that is likely to result. With the range of problems that women and girls face on a daily basis, and with the lack of access to information on the harmful effects of drug use, they are at high risk of dependency and addiction. The use of opium as a medicine to relieve common ailments and other health problems, and to fight depression, is a worrying trend. Nor can we ignore the effect that this problem has on neighbouring countries and on the region as a whole. The situation calls for immediate regional and international action.

We agree that the "six plus two" group could make a useful contribution to drug-related problems and that the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention should play a key role in facilitating its activities in this respect. Their exchange of views on how best to address the drug-related issues in a coordinated manner, with a view to eliminating drug production and trafficking out of Afghanistan through a comprehensive and balanced regional action plan, is one which we support.

In this regard, Jamaica fully supports the draft presidential statement before us today.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada.

Let me begin by thanking those who have welcomed me to the Council Chamber. I appreciate their remarks. I also want to thank Mr. John Renninger for his sombre but informative briefing on the situation in Afghanistan, and Ambassador Listre for his very important report.

Of course, I would like very much to welcome Angela King to our proceedings. Her presence here, I think, underlines an important aspect of the conflict, which preys upon the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan. Their plight demonstrates again today how, in armed conflict, it is the civilians who suffer most. And, as for all victims of armed conflict, the Council bears responsibility for their protection.

The comments of so many speakers today have made it plain that, in Afghanistan, the only unambiguous reality after two decades of civil war, destruction, brutality, violence and deprivation is that Afghan civilians — women, men and children — suffer most from this endless and senseless conflict.

All aspects of this conflict are reprehensible. Some, however, stand out more than others. Some 5 to 7

million anti-personnel landmines are strewn indiscriminately across Afghanistan. They have limited military significance, but continue to kill or maim more than a dozen Afghan civilians every day. The United Nations Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan is making considerable efforts to rid the country of these horrible weapons, yet the Secretary-General's most recent report indicates that new mining is under way, negating those de-mining efforts and in flagrant violation of the provisions of the Ottawa Convention.

Interference with humanitarian operations, particularly the denial of safe and unhindered access to affected populations, imperils the lives of those dependent on such operations for food and medical care. It is only through the efforts of United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and various non-governmental groups that famine has been averted. At a minimum, it is essential that humanitarian operations in Afghanistan be allowed to continue if the war is not to claim hundreds of thousands more victims, directly or indirectly.

Perhaps most disturbing is the Taliban's systematic pattern of violation of the human rights of half the population — women and girls — a violation which the Taliban misrepresent as having a religious foundation. The interdiction on women travelling for any purpose except in the company of a close male relative has been rigorously and, indeed, brutally enforced by the Taliban's virtue and vice squads. Women daring to transgress their ordinances are subject to harsh punishment, including public beatings and torture, but those who obey are virtual prisoners and still subject to harassment and physical abuse.

Restrictions on women's mobility, first introduced in Kabul and other cities by the United Front and retained or extended by the Taliban since their seizure of control, not only deprive women of their human rights and the most basic degree of personal autonomy, but also impede — as we have heard so often today — their access to employment, education and health care.

These restrictions are a matter not of mere neglect, but of active, directed policy. They have compound effects on the situation of women and girls. Maternal mortality rates in Afghanistan are the second highest in the world and, while overall literacy rates are estimated at 30 per cent, for females this number is 13 per cent.

I note in reports that we have heard today that there has been a modest, if localized amelioration, with the Taliban permitting home-schooling for girls, for example. This incremental progress needs to be redoubled, however, if it is to represent even a first step towards meeting the minimal standards required by the international community.

It is fair to say that people around the world are outraged over the treatment of women and girls in Afghanistan. Canadians are no exception. Two years ago, I personally delivered some 5,000 letters from Canadians to the Secretary-General expressing their concerns about the situation in Afghanistan. A group of concerned Canadians recently formed a National Coalition in Support of Afghan Women, which is working to mobilize worldwide action to address the status of women in Afghanistan. If I might add a personal note, this initiative is very much in keeping with the engagement of individual Canadian women in promoting human rights, such as that of the late Mrs. Rae Scott, a prominent activist whose memorial service is being held today. I hope that today's discussion is a justification for the active work that she did over the years.

I am also pleased to announce that, in that same spirit, Canada will provide $300,000 through the United Nations trust fund for human rights to support activities of local and international non-governmental organizations involved in human rights training and programming to benefit Afghan women and girls.

What is very clear is that Afghanistan has joined the small but growing number of countries where the State has disintegrated, leaving a vacuum. The Taliban claim to be a bona fide Government, but behave as a criminal gang, harbouring international terrorists and allowing their country to become the world's largest exporter of illegal opiates. The acceptance they crave must be earned through national reconciliation, the formation of a broad-based and representative Government, the end of tolerance for terrorism and drug trafficking and, above all, through respect for human rights, including women's human rights.

I have spoken of the civil war in Afghanistan. However, it was a foreign invasion that touched off the war, which has been sustained for two decades by material support from various foreign sources. The "six plus two" group has a special responsibility in bringing a peaceful solution to the Afghan conflict. Regrettably, as the Secretary-General's most recent report notes, certain members of this group pay lip service to the objective of peace and continue to support the belligerents. While it

is true that only the Afghans themselves can bring peace to their country, members of the "six plus two" can make a difference in their ability to wage war.

The Security Council has a vital role to play in Afghanistan. There are concrete actions it can take to address the situation. It can insist on full and unhindered access to affected populations by United Nations and associated personnel, the ICRC and other humanitarian personnel, and on guarantees for the safety and security of such staff. It can demand that all parties acquit their responsibilities towards the entire civilian population, with particular attention to restoring the human rights of women. It can demand an immediate end to hostilities, the beginning of honest negotiations and the involvement of the good offices of the Secretary-General and his Personal Representative in the search for peace and national reconciliation. It can look for ways to pressure the warring factions to the negotiating table. Finally, it can consider measures to cut off the supply of weapons to belligerents. I believe that most of these recommendations are contained in the presidential statement.

In October 1999, the Security Council adopted a resolution condemning the Taliban for its harbouring of Usama bin Laden and calling for the imposition of sanctions if the Taliban failed to deliver the indicted terrorist to the appropriate authorities. Canada's support of that resolution is founded on our firm opposition to acts of terrorism, but we recognize that it is also important — and we expressed this view — that the Council show similar commitment in addressing the serious humanitarian and human rights situation in that country.

The discussion today and the presidential statement we will adopt today should underline further the Council's profound dismay with the continued suffering of the Afghan people and our determination to press forward in exploring means to usefully contribute to a resolution of the conflict.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Afghanistan, on whom I now call.

Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan): Habib Bourguiba was a leader of his country and his people, to whom we express our fraternal condolences. Moreover, he was a leader in Asia and Africa. I have personally been a witness to that fact. May God bestow on him His immense charity and kindness.

We are happy you are here, Mr. President, presiding over this meeting. Let me thank you for all Canada has done in favour of peace in Afghanistan. Your statement on behalf of Canada is highly representative of your views.

We thank very much and appreciate the efforts and leadership of Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, who, in the course of the month of March, presided over the Council.

We support the content of document S/2000/205, of 10 March 2000, on the situation in Afghanistan. We thank Mr. Renninger of the Secretariat for his comprehensive briefing. We appreciate the services of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who deployed so many efforts for peace in Afghanistan and we assure the United Nations of our full cooperation with Mr. Francesc Vendrell, who has been in charge of Afghanistan issues recently. We thank Ambassador Listre of Argentina, who heads the Afghan sanctions Committee, for the work he has done.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and Council members for their constant service and their interest in Afghanistan, which was eloquently expressed in the statements of Council members.

The Afghan nation is suffering, especially civilians, and women and girls most particularly.

The involvement of mercenary combatants in Afghanistan is an awful fact. These mercenaries come from religious schools in Pakistan. This was also stated by the Secretariat representative here. This is despite the political change in Pakistan in the month of October. The miliary junta in Pakistan is the main policy maker in Pakistan and of course also had the upper hand in previous civil Government with regard to Afghanistan. Afghanistan affairs were and remain in the hands of the army in Pakistan, especially of the military intelligence, called Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). They have established training camps on the territory of Afghanistan for terrorists, and these training camps are still there. Pakistan still hopes for a military solution in Afghanistan. This is why it is sending arms and ammunition to the Taliban. Their logistical support for the Taliban continues even now.

The military regime in Pakistan continues to use extremist religious groups for its political purposes in the region and beyond. This policy has created a major concern for all the countries of the region. We are firmly

convinced that this policy of Pakistan is not only harmful to the Afghan people, but that it will also be a major obstacle to peace and stability in Pakistan and to the creation of a stable Pakistan as a prosperous nation. The Afghan people are very much in favour of peace and prosperity in Pakistan.

The Islamic State of Afghanistan welcomes today's presidential statement, which has been drafted and will be adopted by the Council very soon, I hope. As made clear in the text of that statement, the Islamic State of Afghanistan is ready to agree to a complete cessation of armed conflict and expects the resolution of the Afghan problem to be based on the establishment in Afghanistan of a representative, broad-based Government which represents all the major ethnic groups. There is no military solution to the Afghan crisis, as was practically proved during the course of the last five years.

We highly appreciate the efforts of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and express our readiness to help towards the success of OIC efforts.

We are grateful to Council members for having clearly condemned all previous Taliban press statements on the recent military offensive of 1 March 2000. In fact, our military intelligence reports show that the Taliban and their Pakistani military advisers are very busy preparing the launch of a new military offensive in the spring. This was also explained by the Secretary-General's representative. In such an atmosphere, we are sure that in the presidential statement to be adopted today by the Council will serve as a timely warning to the Taliban and to their Pakistani junta supporters. They must be aware that the international community cannot remain idle in the face of such an aggressive and systematically bellicose attitude.

The President: I thank the representative of Afghanistan for his kind words addressed to me.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. King to take a seat at the Council table.

I now give the floor to Ms. King to respond to the comments and questions that were issued by members of the Council.

Ms. King: At the outset, Mr. President, I am honoured by your invitation to answer the Council's questions today on the situation of Afghan women and girls. I am most grateful to you for the invitation, and to your Government, and to all those who have consistently provided strong support in incorporating a gender perspective in all aspects of work of the Security Council, including peacemaking and peace-building.

I would also like to say that perhaps today we would not be having this discussion had it not been for the very bold landmark decision of the Council, on 8 March of this year, to incorporate women and girls in all the deliberations of the Council, not just as victims of armed conflict, but also as constructive actors in finding peace. In this regard, I would like to pay a special tribute to Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury for his leadership in this regard, as he was president of the Security Council on 8 March.

Now I would like to turn to some of the questions that were asked. On the issue of the participation of women in civil society, I would strongly suggest that the policy followed by many United Nations agencies — for example the World Food Council, Habitat, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and others — on the principled approach to participation in all aspects of the work of the United Nations and of the projects which we are carrying out, not only to develop the country but for humanitarian assistance, should be continued and fostered.

We find that at the community level, particularly in some rural areas, there is less resistance to women's participation. Although, as we have heard from many speakers, that policy is applied in a somewhat erratic way, it is very important to build on these entry points. For example, some of the projects that have involved women and men in decision-making at these levels have encouraged women's decision-making on where to place a well, because it is the girls in society who have the chore of collecting water and bringing it back to the villages. So, if you place a well far from a home-based school, that means that during school hours the girls will not be going to that home-based school.

Other decisions concern the type of vegetables and seeds they need in order to grow food for their families.

There is a very successful project that has been run by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS) that has drawn men and women together at the local level for sewage disposal and other questions of sanitation within the communities. There are also community councils, and in the inter-agency mission we found some mullahs in Herat and elsewhere who are very open to the participation of women in terms of giving their opinions and seeking their opinions and passing on their advice, sometimes through the mulluhs, to the men of the village.

For civil society and civil participation, electoral education is needed, also education in tolerance and ideas of democracy, including knowledge of the United Nations Charter, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Some of the mechanics of learning how to identify key issues — for example, how to end war, how to get education for children and how to lobby for their needs — are also very important for women to learn at this level if they are to fully participate in the civil action of society. Some of the local non-governmental organizations are already doing this, as are some of the agencies, but this needs far greater financial assistance, and I think that this should be strongly encouraged by the Council.

Above all, the Council and other forums such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women have kept this issue alive, and they must continue to press for the full enjoyment of the rights of women and children, not only for education, health and employment, but in all other areas. The special rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights, and the transmission and promulgation of the findings of their reports, are particularly important.

With regard to how women can seek employment: it is one thing to seek employment; it is another to have employment available. I think that one of the strategies could be for more ministries to be opened up to women. For example, we have recently had reports that women are now being employed — I think about 70 of them — in the Ministry for Social Affairs. This could be opened up, if the Taliban and other authorities are encouraged, to other ministries such as Health, Education and so on.

I would also urge that in Kandahar and Kabul, which are the main locales for decision-making, machinery for the advancement of women should be established, either in terms of a regional unit, a bureau of women's affairs or even a ministry of women's affairs. This can be a focal point within the existing authorities to spread the word and to join the mainstream, and it can also be a focal point for the United Nations agencies.

With regard to seeking better treatment, this is also very difficult and depends very much on the political climate. If there is no political solution, it will be very unlikely that women and girls will really have their situation improved. Very often those who do speak out, we are told, are subject to intimidation, and to harsh and swift retribution in some cases, not only for themselves but for their families.

As one of those with the inter-agency team two years ago, I visited two prisons, one exclusively for women and one where there were women and men but in separate establishments. I would urge that we think in terms of a holistic view; seeking employment and seeking rights has to be within the context of an overall enabling environment where women can do this. With regard to the prisons, one of them had 13 women and some children, some of whom had been born while the women were in prison. There were no sanitary facilities because the current toilets were situated in a part of the building that had been mined. This was in Kandahar.

Emphasis should also be placed by all United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations on giving women in the home-based schools and girls, through textbooks translated into local languages, knowledge of the basic human rights instruments and of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which, incidentally, a former Afghan Government signed, but which Afghanistan has not ratified. They should also have knowledge, as soon as these are developed, of the procedures under the optional protocol to that Convention, through which individual women or groups of women can transmit their complaints directly to this CEDAW committee for investigation and action.

I will strongly suggest that in this connection the United Nations agencies also take a lead and set an example in having more women in those agencies, and at high levels, and in having women particularly from those countries with similar traditional and cultural norms, with a good knowledge of gender equality and of human rights, who might be able to draw on aspects of Koranic and Islamic law and its relation to other instruments of human rights. In this regard, considerable work has been done with non-governmental organizations, academic

groups, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in drawing these distinctions between shariah law, Islamic law and the Convention. We hope that this will encourage the Taliban to see these issues in their true perspective.

Other ways might include further urging United Nations agencies to incorporate gender in all projects. Some outstanding examples are the peace projects of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

A project was also planned by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in Helmand to create alternative means of livelihood by rebuilding a wool factory as an alternative means to drugs. This was to be done jointly with the Taliban authorities, giving work to 1,300 people. The United Nations Drug Programme insisted, as part of the blueprint, that of those 1,300 at least 200 should be women. Regrettably, this project has not yet got off the ground, but it represents the kind of creative thinking that could go some way towards meeting the challenge posed by this issue.

With regard to the question on the Gender Adviser, I must say here that I greatly welcome the United Kingdom's support for the United Nations Gender Adviser and also the announcement that you, Mr. President, just made about its generous contribution to this work in Afghanistan. Some of what the Gender Adviser has done is to create a gender plan of action. This has taken place at the policy level and at the programming level. Contacts have been established within the United Nations donor system and with women's non-governmental organizations and Afghan women. There has been direct training of United Nations staff, many of whom, as noted in the original report, had no real concept of what human rights and gender rights stood for in the United Nations system.

The Gender Adviser, with the strong support of the United Nations Coordinator and the Human Rights Adviser — also part of that report's recommendations — has also identified the United Nations system's need for gender-related interventions — finding what the entry points are, looking around to see what projects are working and seeing if they can be replicated in other areas.

Initial contacts have also been established directly by the United Nations Coordinator and the Gender Adviser with Afghan authorities in Kabul and Kandahar. There has also been an upgrading of the capacity of United Nations programming staff to address gender-related issues in Afghanistan.

These are some of the issues which the Gender Adviser has been engaged with. She has also participated in workshops with United Nations agencies such as the World Bank and in other bilateral initiatives.

One of the important things in terms of this very, very modest shift we have seen in the last 18 months relates to the Mahram edict. The Gender Adviser, for example, is from one of those countries where there is strict application of the Mahram edict, which implies that any woman from a Muslim country, whether international staff or not, has to be accompanied in her daily job by a male family member. This has not been applied in her case, and we now have at least five or six other women — United Nations international staff — who are also from those countries and who are also working without any restrictions.

The representative of Jamaica wanted to know the likelihood of further progress. In my view, further progress, if based on the very incrementally slow progress that we have seen over the last two and a half years, is going to be equally slow unless there is a strong, negotiated peace. I believe that in the deliberations held at the political level, whether by the United Nations or other international agencies or on a bilateral scale, sometimes the issue of gender is very low on the list of priorities or is totally forgotten. I think that we cannot do that; we cannot allow that to happen.

There is another factor affecting the rate of change: the fact that in many United Nations agencies and delegations there are very few women. So we are going to instruct the Taliban to have 50 per cent women or to include more women in their projects and in decision-making, and the United Nations has a united male front. I think that we have to take this rather seriously.

On the issue of steps in the area of human rights, I think that I have addressed that. The existence of programme awareness has also, I think, been covered to some extent.

In terms of the status of project implementation, training is taking place. Some advisers have been appointed, but there is still quite a lot to be done in terms of evaluation, in terms of looking very carefully at the projects from a gender perspective and of seeing to what

extent they are affecting the country and whether they are really bringing about any change.

I would like to close by saying that we should perhaps take into account, in the progress that has been made, the fact that on 8 March 2000, for the very first time in the recent history of Afghanistan, a formal public celebration of International Women's Day was held in Kabul, the capital. Seven hundred women of all ages, including former university professors, engineers, teachers, doctors, nurses and school principals, attended the celebration. Ten of them were honoured with gifts from the organizers of the celebration — the United Nations system, working in very close collaboration with the Taliban authorities. The representative of Mullah Omar made a statement at the celebration. Radio Shariah, the official radio station, covered the event, and permission was given to a wide cross-section of international media to cover the event and conduct random interviews with the women present. At the end of the celebration, it was announced that six women prisoners would be released in celebration of the Day. Two had children living with them in prison. I might add that the daily ration for the women and children is two loaves of bread a day, and I saw the loaves.

To conclude, I would not say that this is cause for euphoria, but I do think that there has been some progress and that with continued pressure from the Council and its members in other forums — the Afghan support group, the United Nations Secretariat — progress can be made. But at the heart of this is a political settlement that is firmly grounded in human rights and gender.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I should like to thank Ms. King for her very helpful clarification and response to these important questions.

I now give the floor to Mr. Renninger to respond to the comments made during the course of these Council proceedings.

Mr. Renninger: I am very conscious of the lateness of the hour. I do not think there were any specific questions directed to me, but I would be remiss if I did not, on behalf of the Secretary-General, express our gratitude for the many expressions of support and encouragement we heard during the debate today.

The President: I would like to thank Mr. Renninger for his awareness of the time, and for his very concise answers.

The representative of Tunisia has asked for the floor.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me once again to express our sincere thanks to you personally, Sir, the Foreign Minister of Canada, and to all the members of the Security Council, for the condolences that they have expressed to the Government and the people of Tunisia on the passing of Habib Bourguiba, the first President of our Republic.

The President: I think that the representative of Tunisia understands just how strongly the passing of his great leader has been felt. I know that it has been felt around the world.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of this agenda item will take place immediately following the adjournment of this meeting.

The meeting rose at 2.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4125

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4125th Meeting
Friday, 7 April 2000, 2.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Axworthy	(Canada)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Kendall
	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahmed
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ag Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Theron
	Netherlands	Mr. Scheffers
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Mr. McGann

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2000/205)

00-38337 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 2.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (S/2000/205)

The President: The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security of 10 March 2000 (A/54/791-S/2000/205).

"The Security Council reiterates its grave concern at the continued Afghan conflict, which is a serious and growing threat to regional and international peace and security. It strongly condemns the Taliban for the launching of new offensives, most notably that of 1 March 2000. The Council expresses its deep concern at the reports that both parties to the conflict are preparing for renewed large-scale fighting and recalls its repeated demands that the Afghan parties cease fighting. These events add to the enormous suffering of the civilian population of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council reiterates that there is no military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan and that only a negotiated political settlement aimed at the establishment of a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative Government acceptable to all Afghans can lead to peace and national reconciliation. It notes that the United Front of Afghanistan is willing to talk with the Taliban and recalls its demand that the parties, in particular the Taliban, resume negotiations under United Nations auspices without delay and preconditions in full compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.

"The Security Council calls upon all Afghan parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to ensure the full and unhindered access of international humanitarian assistance and personnel to all those in need. It expresses its grave concern at the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan as a result of ongoing hostilities. The Taliban has the primary responsibility for this.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the Taliban for the repeated forced entries on 26, 27 and 29 March 2000 by its armed groups into and searches of the United Nations premises in Kandahar and for the intimidation of the United Nations personnel. It stresses that responsibility for the subsequent withdrawal of all international staff from Kandahar and suspension of humanitarian assistance activities in southern Afghanistan rests solely with the Taliban. The Council demands that the Taliban stop these unacceptable practices and ensure the safety and security of all United Nations and associated personnel and humanitarian personnel working in Afghanistan in accordance with international law.

"The Security Council stresses its grave concern at the human rights situation in Afghanistan, which is unacceptable. It expresses particular alarm at the continuing disregard by the Taliban of the concerns expressed by the international community. The Council strongly condemns the forced displacement of the civilian population, notably that conducted by the Taliban in 1999, the deliberate targeting of civilians and the destruction of their assets and means of survival, summary executions, arbitrary detention of civilians and forced labour of those in detention, the separation of men from their families, indiscriminate bombing and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. It calls upon all Afghan parties, especially the Taliban, to put an end to such practices and to ensure the protection of civilians.

"The Security Council reaffirms the principle of non-refoulement of refugees, as provided for in a relevant instrument of international law, welcomes recent efforts of countries neighbouring Afghanistan to support the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees in safety and dignity, and urges those host States to continue to provide international protection

to Afghan refugees in need of it. It encourages the international community to provide the necessary assistance in this regard.

"The Security Council condemns the continuing grave violations of the human rights of women and girls, including all forms of discrimination against them, in all areas of Afghanistan, particularly in areas under the control of the Taliban. It remains deeply concerned about continued restrictions on their access to health care, to education and to employment outside the home, and about restrictions on their freedom of movement and freedom from intimidation, harassment and violence. The Council notes the recent reports of modest progress regarding the access of women and girls to certain services, but considers that such incremental improvements, while welcome, still fall far short of the minimum expectations of the international community, and calls upon all parties, particularly the Taliban, to take measures to end all violations of human rights of women and girls.

"The Security Council reiterates that outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the involvement of foreign combatants and military personnel and the supply of weapons and other materials used in the conflict, should cease immediately. It calls upon all States to take resolute measures to prohibit their military personnel from planning and participating in combat operations in Afghanistan, and immediately to withdraw their personnel and to assure that the supply of ammunition and other war-making materials is halted. The Council expresses its deep concern at the continuing involvement in the fighting in Afghanistan, on the side of the Taliban forces, of thousands of non-Afghan nationals.

"The Security Council reiterates its position that the United Nations must continue to play its central and impartial role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict. It welcomes the appointment of a new Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and the activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) to facilitate a political process aimed at achieving a lasting political settlement to the conflict. The Council supports the phased deployment of the UNSMA Civil Affairs Unit inside Afghanistan, as the security conditions permit.

"The Security Council welcomes the renewed commitment of members of the 'six plus two' group to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict in support of the efforts of the United Nations, and urges the members of the group and the Afghan parties to implement the Tashkent Declaration on Fundamental Principles for a Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan (A/54/174-S/1999/812, annex), particularly the agreement of members of the group not to provide military support to any Afghan party and to prevent the use of their territories for such purposes.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, in support of and in coordination with the United Nations, to facilitate the convening of negotiations between the two Afghan parties. It encourages the process launched in Rome to convene a *loya jirgah* in Afghanistan and acknowledges other recent efforts to promote peace in Afghanistan, such as those of the Cyprus group and the meeting in Tokyo.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the continuing use of Afghan territory, especially areas controlled by the Taliban, for the sheltering and training of terrorists and planning of terrorist acts, and reaffirms its conviction that the suppression of international terrorism is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. It insists that the Taliban cease the provision of sanctuary and training for international terrorists and their organizations, take effective measures to ensure that the territory under its control is not used for terrorist installations and camps or for the preparation or organization of terrorist acts against other States or their citizens, and cooperate with efforts to bring indicted terrorists to justice.

"The Security Council demands once again that the Taliban turn over indicted terrorist Usama bin Laden to appropriate authorities as set out in its resolution 1267 (1999) of 15 October 1999. It stresses that the continued failure of the Taliban to comply with this demand is unacceptable. The Council will ensure effective implementation of the measures imposed by that resolution. It condemns the recent attacks and planned attacks by terrorists affiliated with Usama bin Laden, which constitute a continuing threat to the international community.

"The Security Council reiterates that the capture by the Taliban of the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the murder of the Iranian diplomats and journalist in Mazar-e-Sharif as well as the murders of the United Nations personnel constitute flagrant violations of international law. It expresses its concern at the failure of the Taliban effectively to bring to justice those responsible for these crimes. The Council reiterates its demand that the Taliban cooperate fully with the United Nations in this regard.

"The Security Council is deeply disturbed by an alarming increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan, especially in areas controlled by the Taliban, and by its consequences for the continuation of the conflict. It demands that the Taliban, as well as others, halt all illegal drugs activities. The Council encourages the initiative of the 'six plus two' group to address the drug-related issues in a coordinated manner with the support of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. It also encourages Member States and others concerned to increase their support for the efforts aimed at strengthening the drug control capacities of countries bordering Afghanistan.

"The Security Council stresses the need for prompt and effective implementation by all Member States of the measures imposed by its resolution 1267 (1999), and reminds Member States of their obligations under this resolution, including assisting in the identification of Taliban assets and aircraft. It underlines that sanctions are not aimed at the Afghan people, but are imposed against the Taliban because of its non-compliance with that resolution. The Council reaffirms its decision to assess the impact, including the humanitarian implications, of the measures imposed by that resolution. It encourages the Committee established pursuant to its resolution 1267 (1999) to report in this respect as soon as practicable.

"The Security Council holds the leadership of the Taliban responsible for not taking measures to comply with the demands made in its resolutions, especially to conclude a ceasefire and to resume negotiations, and stresses the need for the Taliban to comply with these demands without delay.

"In this context the Security Council reaffirms its readiness to consider the imposition of further targeted measures, in accordance with its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations, with the aim of achieving the full implementation of all its relevant resolutions."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2000/12.

I thank all representatives for their time and consideration and for their welcome remarks. I think that the Security Council has issued an important statement.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 2.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4126

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4126th Meeting
Thursday, 13 April 2000, 5 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Fowler	(Canada)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahmed
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Alabrune
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Kasse
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Kooijmans
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Angola

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA) (S/2000/304)

00-39070 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Angola

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA) (S/2000/304)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Angola, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Patricio (Angola) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Angola, document S/2000/304.

Members of the Council also have before them a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's consultations, document S/2000/307.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution (S/2000/307) before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, China, France, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1294 (2000).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4127

Security Council
Fifty-fifth Year

Provisional

4127th Meeting
Friday, 14 April 2000, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Axworthy	(Canada)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Ahmed
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation concerning Rwanda

Letter dated 15 December 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1999/1257).

00-39176 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Rwanda

Letter dated 15 December 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1999/1257)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Rwanda in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, Chairman of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Carlsson to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1999/1257, which contains a letter dated 15 December 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. I wish to express appreciation to the Secretary-General for having commissioned the Independent Inquiry, with the approval of the Security Council.

In this connection, I should like to recall that in a statement issued on 16 December 1999, following the receipt of the report of the Independent Inquiry, the Secretary-General stated that he fully accepted its conclusions. In that statement, he also welcomed the emphasis which the Inquiry had put on the lessons to be learned from the tragedy and the Inquiry's careful and well-argued recommendations, which, he noted, were aimed at ensuring that the United Nations could and would act to prevent or halt any other such catastrophe in the future.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Carlsson. May I, on behalf of the Council, take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to Mr. Carlsson and to the other members of the Independent Inquiry, Professor Han and General Kupolati, for the manner in which they discharged the important responsibility entrusted to them.

I now give the floor to Mr. Carlsson.

Mr. Carlsson: I am grateful for the opportunity to present the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

I am pleased that the report is to be discussed in substance in the Security Council, one of the main bodies to which the recommendations were addressed. I commend Canada's initiative to convene this meeting.

It is now six years since the beginning of the genocide in Rwanda, six years since hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were brutally massacred by their own countrymen in only 100 horrific days. This was a genocide which took place before the eyes of the international community and before the eyes of the United Nations peacekeeping force. We, the international community, did not prevent, nor did we stop, the massacres once they had begun. Our failure to do so is the reason we are here today. We had a responsibility to act and failed to do so.

The question before the Security Council today is why, and what can be done to see to it that what happened in Rwanda in 1994 never happens again. The Independent Inquiry was set up at the initiative of the Secretary-General, with the acceptance of the Security

Council. I was joined by two colleagues, Mr. Han Sung-Joo of the Republic of Korea, and General Rufus Kupolati of Nigeria. We had two main tasks: to establish the facts related to the role of the United Nations during the genocide and to make recommendations for the future. We visited Rwanda and other countries in the Great Lakes region. We visited New York several times and conducted in-depth interviews with key United Nations officials. We visited France, Belgium and the United States. We spoke to a number of survivors of the genocide, the families of the 10 Belgian peacekeepers who were killed, members of the local staff of the United Nations in Rwanda at the time and other witnesses. They helped to provide us with the necessary, if painful, understanding of what happened.

My colleague and I presented our report to the Secretary-General on 15 December last year. In the report we identified what we considered were the failings of the United Nations before and during the genocide and formulated 14 recommendations for the future.

Today, I want to highlight the main conclusions of the Inquiry, but want to focus particularly on the forward-looking element of the report, its recommendations. This Council has the power to prevent some of the mistakes that were made in Rwanda from happening again. I hope today's discussion will help to mobilize will in this respect.

The Inquiry found that the overriding failure of the United Nations was the lack of resources and the lack of political will to act. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was often called an orphan operation, one that suffered from being created in the aftermath of Somalia. It was smaller and weaker than what was needed, and the mandate was based on an over-optimistic assessment of the peace process in Rwanda at the time. When the genocide started, the Mission was not working as a cohesive operation. As we wrote in our report, there was a lack of political leadership, a lack of military capacity, severe problems of command and control and a lack of coordination and discipline.

In the report, we tried to identify in each particular case where the responsibility lay within the United Nations system. The United Nations had a peacekeeping operation numbering 2,500 personnel in Rwanda when the genocide started. They should have been able to prevent or at least limit the genocide. In effect, however, despite the courageous efforts of some of the United Nations staff in Rwanda, the force disintegrated. There were certainly acts of bravery by those in UNAMIR who stayed in Rwanda. There are people in Rwanda and abroad who owe their lives to the United Nations, but there were also those who were left behind when the United Nations left Rwanda. Some of these were massacred, others were at risk of being killed. The withdrawal of the bulk of the Mission left a lot of bitterness behind in Rwanda.

I should also say that our report also included criticisms of UNAMIR and some of the troops in Rwanda. It is important also to say that those countries which did not send troops or *matériel* to Rwanda, including my own country, also share responsibility for what happened. It is a terrible fact that UNAMIR was never able to get the troops that it needed, neither in quantity nor in capacity.

The Inquiry emphasized the need for the international community to be prepared to identify situations of genocide as such and to act accordingly. Political will is the key here. A lack of political will to act is perhaps the most dangerous obstacle to United Nations efforts to bring about and keep peace and undermines the authority and legitimacy of the United Nations itself. One of the aspects of the United Nations role during the genocide which has caused most bitterness in Rwanda is the fact that a few weeks after the start of the genocide, the Council decided to reduce the strength of UNAMIR to about one tenth of the original number. This decision, and the lack of will to react firmly to the actions of the extremists, put Rwandan civilians and the remaining United Nations personnel at risk. It was a decision taken despite clear evidence of the horrors which were taking place in Rwanda, in the face of evidence of a genocide.

A key recommendation of our report emphasized the need to improve the capacity of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping. The members of this Inquiry are not the first to say this, and unfortunately, we are not likely to be the last. But I would like to ask the members of the Security Council to take this point seriously. The United Nations remains the only organization which can bring global legitimacy to peacekeeping. The reverse side of that coin is that failed peacekeeping efforts cause devastating damage to the credibility of this Organization. To the members of the Security Council I would say, give peacekeeping operations the mandates they need. See to it that the resources provided fit that mandate. Mobilize the political will to provide the troops that the United Nations needs at short notice and show the same determination to exercise responsibility for international law, peace and security, wherever the crisis and whatever the continent.

To the Secretary-General I would say, continue to focus on improving the Secretariat's capacity to plan and prepare peacekeeping operations. In recommending peacekeeping operations, tell the Security Council what the real needs on the ground are, how many troops, what mandate, how tough the task is. It is then the responsibility of this Council not to allow short-term budgetary or other financial considerations to overrule those needs. It must ensure that there is full coordination on the ground between different United Nations bodies involved and use the lessons learned from previous operations.

I hope that the panel that has been appointed to follow up on the Rwanda and Srebrenica reports will help in identifying these lessons. The real challenge will be to bring the lessons into the everyday planning for peacekeeping.

Finally, on this point, I would hope that all Member States will use the Millennium Summit and Assembly to create momentum to deal with the problems facing United Nations peacekeeping. Member States will have the chance to see the political imperatives of making peacekeeping work and to solve the problems which have plagued peacekeeping efforts for so long.

During the months leading up to the genocide, the United Nations, but also Member States and non-government actors, failed to really recognize the systematic horrors of what was being planned. There were warning signs, but these were not given the attention they needed. Much attention has been focused on the fate of the Dallaire cable, and it was discussed in detail in our report. I think the main lesson is the following: information of that magnitude, and clearly any information which relates to the threat to exterminate a population, should be shared with the Security Council as a whole and must lead to a firm reaction.

Efforts have been made over the past years to improve the United Nations capacity for early warning. The Inquiry believes those efforts must continue. A key aspect is improving cooperation between departments concerned in the Secretariat. Another relates to improving the flow of information to the Security Council. This also depends on members of the Council receiving briefings from those officials most qualified to do so, be it the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Information on the human rights situation is often a key indicator of warning signs. This was so in Rwanda.

Much has been said on the need to improve our capacity for prevention. Learning the lessons from Rwanda is a question of putting prevention into practice, of combining the will to act in time with the capacity to do so. Improving the protection of civilians is a key task for the United Nations. The Inquiry recommends that mandates of peacekeeping operations, where appropriate, explicitly include the protection of civilians. I very much welcome the work done within the Council on improving the protection of civilians, based on the report by the Secretary-General last year. I hope that this thematic emphasis will also add momentum when dealing with these issues in individual conflicts.

I would like to mention two lessons from Rwanda in this regard. First, there can be no neutrality in the face of the threat of genocide or massive violation of human rights. The United Nations and its peacekeepers must react. Secondly, it is important to recognize that the presence of a United Nations mission, whether or not its mandates include the protection of civilians, will create an expectation among the civilian population that they will be protected by the United Nations. This needs to be taken into account when planning operations, but also when discussing how mandates are implemented.

The mistakes that were made by the international community in Rwanda were grave. We must make a determined effort to see to it that the same thing never occurs again. Preventing genocide is a duty; it is also an effort which goes beyond what is normally understood by prevention. The Inquiry therefore recommended that the Secretary-General initiate a specific United Nations action plan to prevent genocide. The idea would be for each part of the United Nations system to examine what concrete steps it needs to take within its mandate to be better prepared to prevent genocide. Political analysts, peacekeepers and humanitarian officers should all be trained to recognize the warning signs. Headquarters should be prepared to pick up an early warning and to translate it into early action. The Inquiry's hope is that a United Nations action plan of this kind could provide concrete input to the World Conference against Racism next year.

Finally, I want to express the hope that this report will contribute to improving the relations between Rwanda and the United Nations. I also hope that the recommendations will be taken on board in future discussions on the role of the United Nations in conflict situations.

The President: I would like to thank Mr. Carlsson for his very comprehensive and very significant briefing.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): First, allow me to express my delegation's appreciation both to the members of the Independent Inquiry — Mr. Carlsson, Mr. Han Sung-Joo and General Kupolati — for what is commonly called the Carlsson report, and to the Secretary-General for having taken the initiative to set up this Inquiry.

The objective of our contribution to this debate is to share with the Council a number of thoughts that have crossed our mind while reading the Carlsson report. Some of these thoughts may be relevant to what we are doing in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We do not expect to come up with answers during this meeting. An open Council meeting may be the appropriate forum for articulating questions; finding answers will require more time for careful study. We hope that all the questions that remain unanswered today will be addressed by the panel chaired by Mr. Brahimi, which has been asked to conduct to a major study on United Nations peace operations.

As we are reminded in the Rwanda report, there is also a Srebrenica report, and both are relevant to the present analysis. For obvious reasons, my delegation is acutely aware of this. But in the report before us, we are also reminded of the responsibility of the great majority of United Nations Member States, which were not prepared to send any troops or *matériel* at all to Rwanda. A similar observation could, of course, be made about Srebrenica. Accordingly, instead of criticizing anyone, we would like to begin by commending Ghana and Tunisia, which allowed their troops to remain in Rwanda throughout the terrible weeks of the genocide, despite the withdrawal of other contingents.

Next, we would like to make some observations on the issue of feasibility. The report poses what it terms the "natural question": why a force numbering 2,500 could not stop the actions of the militia and Rwandese Government Forces soldiers that began setting up roadblocks and killing politicians and Tutsi in the early hours after the plane crash which killed the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi. The question becomes even more pertinent if we ask ourselves what could have been done if the 11 January cable of Brigadier General Dallaire had been handled properly. In a case of such urgency, simply replying that the proposed action would clearly go beyond the mandate entrusted to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) under resolution 872 (1993) does not, in our view, constitute proper handling. It is true that Rwanda's membership of the Security Council complicated matters, but we feel that the other 14 Council members should have been informed without delay. Of course, the need to protect the informant required a high degree of confidentiality, but if that was the Secretariat's primary concern it might have been safer to inform 14 Permanent Representatives than President Habyarimana.

The point we wish to make is that feasibility depends on timing. Action which is feasible one day may not be feasible a month later. Once the window of opportunity has passed, the need to intervene will usually increase in inverse proportion to a dwindling political will to do so. It is not our intention to apportion blame, for almost all of us live in a glass house as far as action or inaction in the field of peacekeeping is concerned. Besides, as for timing, Dallaire's 11 January cable was by no means the first warning signal.

How had the international community reacted to the events of 9 March 1992, when a systematic slaughter of the Tutsis in Nyamata was aborted thanks to the Italian lay sister Tonia Locatelli, who succeeded in alerting the international media by radio but was then brutally murdered herself? The initial indignation caused by that event had soon died down because killings in Rwanda were seen as an age-old phenomenon, best viewed with a degree of even-handedness and not too much emotion. Tutsis were at risk in Government-controlled areas, and Hutu lives were in peril where the Rwandese Patriotic Front was in control. On 4 August 1993, the Arusha Peace Agreement was welcomed with a sense of relief because it gave the international community a peace process to support, as the perfect expression of its even-handedness.

This may explain why, one week later, hardly anyone paid any attention to the report of Mr. Waly Bacre Ndiaye, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. Mr. Ndiaye reported so many massacres of Tutsis that he asked himself whether the term "genocide" might be applicable. It is clear why a report of that nature was not immediately welcomed by an international community which had just placed its trust in the Arusha Peace Agreement. What is disconcerting, however, is that for so long afterwards — even after the genocide had begun — many protagonists continued to focus on the risk of jeopardizing the Arusha Peace Agreement, as though that accord were of a higher value than the thousands of people who were meanwhile being killed.

On 15 April 1994, after the Interim Government had taken office and already fled from Kigali, the President of the Security Council made a statement to the press which made no mention of the ongoing massacres but reaffirmed that the Arusha Peace Agreement was the only viable framework for the resolution of the Rwanda conflict. The Council therefore demanded that the parties agree to an immediate ceasefire and return to the negotiating table.

This statement was made at a time when, according to an estimate of Human Rights Watch, killers carried out the most devastating massacres of the genocide, in some cases slaying hundreds or even thousands of people in one or two days. Obviously, this unworldliness of the Council could not last. On 28 April, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria complained that too much attention was being paid to the ceasefire negotiations and too little to the massacres. Two days later, on 30 April, the Council issued a presidential statement which admitted for the first time that killings of civilians had taken place especially in areas under the control of members or supporters of the Interim Government of Rwanda. Even in that statement, however, the word "genocide" did not appear.

We see a number of lessons to be learned from this part of the report. First, we should not treat a peace process as something of a higher order than the populations of the countries concerned. Secondly, we should not clutch at a peace process that has ceased to be relevant. A peace process may be dead, in which case it is the conflict that demands our attention. Thirdly, we should pay more attention to non-governmental organizations and, perhaps, somewhat less to countries with experience in the region. Most non-governmental organizations have a wealth of up-to-date information from the ground. On that basis, they tend to have a fresh approach and an open mind and are unlikely to mistake killers for victims. Fourthly, even-handedness is not a virtue when genocide is going on.

It is pointed out in the report that the credibility of the United Nations requires that troop contributors refrain from withdrawing unilaterally from a peace operation if that withdrawal may be expected to jeopardize the operation in question. It is understandable, but unfortunate, that a troop-contributing country which suffers heavy casualties will inevitably find itself under pressure from its parliament and its media to withdraw its contingent. The more this reflex can be counted on, the greater the likelihood that precisely such a contingent will be targeted by parties opposed to the peace operation. We have no solution for this problem, but it raises a discomforting question as to the suitability of democratic countries for peace operations. We recall how, in the case of Sierra Leone, Nigeria suddenly found it more difficult to play its leading role in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) after it had restored democratic rule.

We have already referred to the complicating factor that, during the genocide, Rwanda was a member of the Security Council. The report recommends that further study be given to the possibility of suspending the participation of the representative of a State member of the Security Council in similar circumstances. We would not object to such a study, but we believe that it would be difficult to define the nature and scale of the occurrence that might justify such a suspension. Moreover, quite apart from the issue of Council membership, we are concerned about the general reluctance to acknowledge that, in the event of massive human rights abuses taking place in a given country — especially if they have given rise to armed rebellion — the Government of that country may be in the wrong. We believe that the unwillingness to condemn the Interim Government of Rwanda for the genocide it was directing was due not only to its Council membership.

As for the role of the individual members of the Interim Government, the report raises the question of whether their accountability was made sufficiently clear to them at the time. This question is of immediate "lessons-learned" relevance for the situation in Sierra Leone. Can we trust all the actors in that country to be fully aware that the amnesty provisions of the Lomé Accord do not apply to human rights abuses committed after the signing of that instrument and are not binding on non-parties, anyway?

Equally, in the context of lessons learned, we would like to point out that the report briefly touches on the origin of the problem in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which rightly finds itself at the very top of the Council's agenda. The outflow from the humanitarian protection zone under Operation Turquoise is described as the starting point of one of the most complicated and sensitive humanitarian emergencies of recent years: the huge exodus of Rwandan refugees into Zaire, whose camps were to become infiltrated by the Interahamwe and other forces behind the genocide.

In this connection, we would like to comment briefly on some of the recommendations contained in the report. We agree that the United Nations should acknowledge its part of the responsibility for not having

done enough to prevent or stop the genocide in Rwanda. We have noted with deep respect the statement made by the Belgian Prime Minister on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the beginning of the Rwanda genocide. Belgium, of course, is not alone in having failed. The whole international community should acknowledge its share of the responsibility. But the best way of doing so today is to show understanding for Rwanda's legitimate security concerns.

Similarly, my delegation fully subscribes to the recommendation that the international community should support efforts to rebuild Rwandan society after the genocide, paying particular attention to the need for reconstruction, reconciliation and respect for human rights.

We also agree that everything must be done to prevent future catastrophes of the type that took place in Srebrenica and in Rwanda. We support the proposals for enhancing early warning and early response capacity. It is at least equally important, however, that we be aware that with all the training of staff at Headquarters, in agencies and in programmes, and, not least, of personnel in field missions, we cannot rule out that people may once again expect a degree of protection from a United Nations peace operation that the latter cannot deliver.

We should not forget that this is what Srebrenica and Rwanda had in common. No matter how much we may increase the robustness of our mandates or how widely we may broadcast their strict limitations, we can never be sure that frightened civilians will not force their way into the compound of a United Nations peace operation and then expect protection beyond that operation's legal mandate or physical capacity. Such a situation could once more lead to a humanitarian tragedy. We would not like to give the impression that we have already found a way of making sure that something of the sort will never happen again.

The Rwanda report is at its most poignant where it describes the false expectations aroused by the United Nations presence, for instance among the people who had sought refuge at the Ecole Technique Officielle. The essence of the Srebrenica tragedy is of a similar nature. This may well be the most important problem to be studied by the Brahimi panel, for as long as it is not solved it jeopardizes the whole concept of peace operations. Hence, it must be solved. The inarticulate urge to do something is a notoriously bad motivating force, but the solution cannot be that we do not do what needs to be done.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): We listened with to Mr. Carlsson with great interest, and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to him and to the other participants in the Independent Inquiry for their great work done in the study and analysis of the tragic events that took place six years ago. The report, with its conclusions and recommendations, is indeed an outstanding contribution to the work of the Organization as a whole and of the Security Council in particular in the fulfilment of their primary task: maintaining and strengthening international peace and security.

We would also like to commend the delegation of Canada for bringing this issue to an open briefing. We hope that our in-depth analysis of the steps and actions taken by the United Nations, by individual Member States and officials and by participants in the events will be correctly interpreted and accepted by the international community. Honest and frank discussion of the failures, faults and mistakes of the Organization — a critical look at ourselves — could to a great extent rehabilitate and strengthen the credibility of the United Nations.

I would like to emphasize another important point. The report straightforwardly describes the events, gives specific names and refers to particular actions and decisions. We should certainly should give credit to the Secretary-General for appointing an independent inquiry. That required great courage and self-criticism on the part of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. Their readiness to assume their part of the responsibility and to take on heavy and fair criticism undoubtedly deserves respect.

It would not be erroneous to say that this report also makes a valuable contribution to enhancing the openness, transparency and democratization of the United Nations. The appointment of the Independent Inquiry and the subsequent release of its report also constituted a lesson and a warning to all of us — first and foremost to the Security Council. It proves that no steps and decisions — or the lack of these — can be concealed from succeeding generations.

For Ukraine, genocide is not just a term. We experienced difficult times in our own history: this century alone witnessed an unspeakable tragedy, when more than 7 million people were exterminated within two years by a well-planned famine. These events took place in the country once called the breadbasket of Europe. Today's meeting provides an opportunity for me to extend, on behalf of my country, deep condolences to the

people of Rwanda, who have gone through this deadly machine of genocide, a tragedy that deeply scarred the history of that country.

In both cases the international community was aware of the developments, but did nothing to prevent or ultimately to stop the tragedy. Therefore, I entirely share the view expressed by Mr. Carlsson that no consideration of a political, organizational or financial nature should prevent the international community, and the Security Council on its behalf, from taking decisive and uncompromising measures in the face of similar catastrophes.

It is not my intention to make a detailed analysis of the report. In the light of the remarks made by Mr. Carlsson and by the previous speaker, I will refrain from commenting on its specific conclusions and recommendations.

The major point, in our view, is that the report has become the subject of multifaceted and diverse work. Let us hope that this will bear fruit with regard to the work of the United Nations and its bodies, as well as to the commitment of individual Member States to their responsibilities stemming from the United Nations Charter.

We shall also refrain from remarks analysing the causes of events in Rwanda. Genocide is a tragedy of such immense scale that its causes and consequences have individual distinctions, and they are unlikely to be repeated with the same dynamics in other cases — and may God forbid such repetitions. However, the report and the work done in that direction are extremely important in our view. With its factual accuracy, it not only made us look at ourselves, but also made us see in that mirror all the shortcomings, mistakes and failures of the United Nations and the whole international community.

Before concluding, I wish to note that a few days ago we learned about the early retirement of Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire. Members may be aware of the reasons for the retirement of that 53-year old career officer. We would like to pay tribute to the courage of that man, regretting that his honest and dedicated stance did not receive an adequate response from New York, and that all his efforts to prevent the tragedy ended in failure.

The President: We appreciate the comments of the representative of Ukraine concerning the role played by General Dallaire. We will make sure that he knows fully of the sentiments he expressed.

I think it is appropriate, in the context of this discussion of the failure of the Security Council in Rwanda, that I announce on behalf of the Council that we have asked Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to lead, early next month, a Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission is designed to accelerate full acceptance and implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, and to support the relevant Security Council resolutions. I wish Ambassador Holbrooke and his mission every success in that very timely initiative.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I would like to thank you again, Mr. Minister, for coming back from Canada to chair this important meeting. I accept the mandate of the Security Council to lead this mission and am delighted that the membership of it is shaping up. I think it would be useful to note that a prior mission to Kosovo will be headed by Ambassador Chowdhury and that these two missions further the evolving role of the Security Council as an organization which, following on the historic work of Ambassador Andjaba's mission to East Timor last year, will take a more active role not only in adopting resolutions but in making sure they are implemented. So I welcome this assignment, Mr. President, and I believe that it is a mission that can be frankly said to give us the hope that we will avoid another meeting such as this one in the future, so it is very timely to announce it today.

Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you and your colleagues for you efforts in producing this historic report. Along with the Secretary-General's report on Srebrenica, which Ambassador van Walsum has already discussed, it is a remarkable document, a remarkable self-criticism. We have much to learn from these documents. That these reports were sponsored and generated by the United Nations itself is a testament to our collective commitment to work with the Secretary-General to reform the United Nations, to overcome and avoid the failures of the past and to do better in the future.

Fifty-five years ago the United Nations was created in the ashes of the Second World War to help prevent conflict and atrocities. It is the primary responsibility of this body, the Security Council, to stand against such horrible actions and take the lead in response. This is our core task. This is the one, ultimately, upon which the United Nations will be judged by the people of the world.

The report makes clear that in Rwanda, as in Bosnia and Somalia, the international system failed and that these collective failures nearly brought the United Nations system down. It sparked an institutional and political crisis from which the United Nations system is trying to recover and which it will be severely tested in the "big four" of peacekeeping: East Timor, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

For its part, our nation accepts its own shortcomings in this terrible period. This has been expressed with openness and candour by President Clinton himself during his historic 1998 visit to Africa. In his visit to Kigali he said,

> "The international community, together with the nations in Africa, must bear its share of responsibility for this tragedy as well. We did not act quickly enough after the killing began. We should not have allowed the refugee camps to become safe havens for the killers. We did not immediately call these crimes by their rightful name: genocide. We cannot change the past, but we can and must do everything in our power to help Rwanda build a future without fear and full of hope."

There is little I can add to President Clinton's statement. Like the Carlsson report and the Secretary General's report on Srebrenica, his words stand as an indictment of both the perpetrators and the bystanders. They are a call to action to prevent the recurrence of genocidal violence.

In the trip that my colleagues and I made in our national capacity to Africa and to Rwanda in December of last year, I visited a memorial, on a hillside outside of Kigali, to the victims of the genocide, accompanied by many of the survivors, still in a state of shock, five years later. Like the massacre sites of the Balkans or the factories of death of Nazi Germany or the killing fields of Cambodia, a visit to such a place of memory commands justice for the dead and hope for the living. The people stood in a field with wooden crosses and asked if the United Nations could help make it a permanent memorial. They told me that they estimated the cost would be $300,000. I hope that some way can be found to accommodate this request so that we can recognize in a physical way on that hillside in Kigali the two fundamental imperatives we must focus on here in this Chamber: never forget, and never again.

What happened in Rwanda and Bosnia was not the spontaneous result of some sort of genetic predisposition for genocide or that dreadful phrase of journalists, "ancient ethnic hatreds". Such judgements are an excuse for inaction. I repeat, such judgements are an excuse for inaction. I have written in my own book on Bosnia how appalled I was to hear these phrases coming from American officials in regard to Bosnia, and I commend you, Mr. Prime Minister, for being so direct and open about them in regard to this tragedy.

The atrocities in Rwanda were carried out by a small group of murderers intent on promoting hate to preserve power — just as was true in Bosnia. These were political acts, plain and simple. Those perpetrating them must be held responsible. For not acting against such violence when there were clear indications it would take place, so must we, the international community.

Again, we are grateful to Prime Minister Carlsson and his colleagues for their unsparing report. It is a historical document and, we hope, a blueprint for the future.

That future must now be our highest priority. The prevention of another round of violence, genocidal or otherwise, in Central Africa is a core element of the United States policy in the Great Lakes. It is one of the United Nations greatest current challenges.

The legacy of genocide and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda, Burundi and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a tragic reality that must be addressed and which will, Mr. President, be the focus of the mission you have announced today. We undertake your mandate with humility and hope, and I am delighted that so many members of the Security Council here represented will join in that mission. I know that you have decided that every country here should either go to Kosovo or the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the divisions are still being finalized, but I congratulate you on an excellent solution to that aspect of the problem, because Kosovo equally demands our attention.

In regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we must end the cycle of impunity. Our discussion today should galvanize support for United Nations sanctions against the Rwandan armed forces and the Interahamwe. We must also begin to plan and prepare for demobilization and reintegration of other armed groups in the Great Lakes region.

The United States supports the International war crimes Tribunal in Rwanda. We continue to press for reforms to make it more effective. We support Rwanda's own domestic justice system, which is sometimes misunderstood by other people. We have allocated $25 million for the Great Lakes Justice Initiative to help re-establish and strengthen the rule of law in that area.

It is undeniable that many of the Rwandan murderers remain at large within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and many of those wish to renew the genocide. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is unable to prevent the use of its territory by these armed groups. It is simply outside their physical, logistical and political capability. It is therefore time for all the States of the region to come together and find a common solution for the insurgencies of the groups that are not fully covered inside the Lusaka Cease Fire Agreement. Angolan, Rwandan, Burundian and Sudanese groups operate with impunity in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The solution lies both within the countries of origin of these groups and within the country that is the often unwilling host.

We all know that something must be done. The full implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and a rededication to the institutions of justice offer the best hope for an end to the present crisis. We cannot say that the solution to Rwanda's problems lies exclusively in actions within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Neither can we say that Rwanda's problems should be solved without addressing the presence of the genocidal militia in a neighbouring State. Lusaka's full implementation, local and international justice, and democratization and institution-building in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the keys to preventing further conflict and genocide.

We share the previously expressed view of the representative of the Netherlands that the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations is inadequately staffed and inadequately structured to deal with the massive challenges that are posed by the African crises as well as by East Timor, Somalia and their other missions. However, we emphatically support the Secretary-General's peacekeeping commission. We look forward to its results and urge that it be ambitious in its goals.

Meanwhile, we must deal with ongoing crises. In the mission to Kinshasa that will begin on 2 May, the Security Council will assess the status of the progress being made, and we will urge the parties to do more. In the days ahead, how we act to help bring peace to the Congo will be the best tribute to the important report we are discussing today.

I wish also to thank the President for coming back to New York to chair this important and, I hope, potentially historic meeting.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to welcome Mr. Carlsson and thank him and the other members of the Independent Inquiry for the clear-sighted, courageous and informative report he submitted to us.

Let me recall that in this context the Organization of African Unity has also established an International Panel of Eminent Persons to analyse the Rwandan genocide and related events. Mali is proud to participate in that work through General Amadou Toumani Touré, former head of State of Mali.

The main conclusion we can draw from the analysis of the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda is that the Organization and its Member States were not able to prevent or to halt the genocide in Rwanda. This conclusion is based on what the report deems to be an absence of capacity for analysis, which is the reason for the excessive and incomprehensible caution shown in the face of information regarding preparations for genocide. It also condemns the lack of political will to halt the genocide, which was partly the result of resolution 912 (1994) of 21 April 1994, which reduced the force level of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, and partly of the weakening of the mandate of that Mission.

These considerations were discussed at length in Mr. Carlsson's briefing today, and I will not repeat them. I would like to point out, however, that in addition to pointing out the failings of the Organization and its Member States, the report draws lessons from the tragedy of Rwanda and contains many proposals and recommendations. Today's meeting gives us a useful opportunity to engage in public and constructive reflection so that we can formulate guidelines to enable the United Nations to respond effectively to various types of conflict.

I should like in this respect to make a few brief comments.

My first comment relates to the capacity of the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping, in particular regarding the mobilization of resources, the strengthening of the means of the Secretariat in the area of operations planning, logistical support to the contingents of developing countries, the definition of mandates and of rules of engagement, coordination and cooperation between peacekeeping operations and the non-governmental organizations that are active in the area of operations, and, finally, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations.

We support the recommendations contained in the report, which were mentioned earlier by Mr. Carlsson.

My second comment relates to the decision-making process in the Council, in this case the question of the indispensable political will in the Council to give effect to resolutions and the fairness it must show in dealing with issues concerning Africa in particular compared to other conflict areas. Indeed, the political will to act, and in particular to prevent acts of genocide, such as in the case of Rwanda, or massive violations of human rights, such as in Sierra Leone or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, should be clear and should not be subject to double standards. Attempts to advance national interests at the expense of international peace and security should cease.

My third comment relates to the system for gathering and dealing with information in crisis situations. It is imperative, we think, that the early warning capacity of the United Nations be enhanced, particularly its capacity to analyse information and react effectively to it. While we welcome the measures already taken at various levels of the Secretariat, we still must enhance the circulation of information among the United Nations agencies, in particular information relating to human rights.

Fourthly, with respect to efforts to rebuild society in Rwanda after the genocide, we believe that the international community must continue to give aid and assistance to Rwanda, devoting particular attention to efforts aimed at reconstruction and at bringing about reconciliation and respect for human rights, in order to realize the hopes that have begun to emerge.

Fifthly and lastly, with respect to the relationship between the Organization and Rwanda, we believe that the Organization should acknowledge its share of responsibility in the tragedy in Rwanda, and we welcome the resolve of the Secretary-General actively to seek a new beginning in the relationship between the United Nations and Rwanda.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom is grateful to Canada for organizing this open debate and for thus following up the discussion of the Carlsson report which the United Kingdom instigated among members of the Council in December.

We pay tribute to Prime Minister Carlsson and to his Korean and Nigerian colleagues on the Inquiry for the excellent job that they have done and to the Secretary-General for taking this initiative of commendable transparency.

It is important that our discussions should look to the future. We must all, Member States and the Secretariat, be prepared to learn from the report of the Independent Inquiry team, to discuss its recommendations in depth and to explore any other realistic ways to avoid such humanitarian catastrophes in future. The United Kingdom is very ready to do that.

We also need to look to the future of the people of Rwanda. What they need now is political commitment and practical support in their efforts to rebuild their country. The United Kingdom Government is committed to working in partnership with the Government and the people of Rwanda to build national unity and develop democratic processes in a society where trust was destroyed by genocide.

Rwanda also needs to restore the rule of law and address the devastating economic impact of the genocide. Given the background of 1994, and before that the legacy of decades of divisive and exclusionary rule, such a task will take time. The United Kingdom is committed to working in an open partnership with Rwanda to keep that process on track. For instance, we are now providing long-term development assistance to help Rwanda to meet international development targets, and I think that answers one of the points made by the Ambassador of Mali. For its part, Rwanda has made specific commitments in the areas of national unity, good governance, conflict resolution, poverty reduction and economic stability, commitments which it must fulfil.

The Carlsson report highlights a range of failures encompassing all those involved, and it puts forward a number of recommendations for the future. I will focus on those issues relating to the Security Council. Perhaps

most damning is the apparent failure to face up to the reality on the ground when it really mattered. This failure became evident in two important aspects: first, the original mandate was based on the commitment of the parties to the Arusha Peace Accords but did not properly take account of the fragility of those Accords; second, and most important, the Council failed to respond to the drastically changing situation on the ground.

It is apparent that there were real problems in the flow of information, including to the Security Council. Some of the causes were structural. But there also appears to have been a perception — probably justified — that the Security Council, and maybe the United Nations membership as a whole, did not have the political stomach for hearing and responding to the unadorned truth. This is fundamental. The Council needs accurate, timely and unfiltered information. At the same time, the Council and the United Nations membership as a whole must demonstrate the political will to act on that information, however unpalatable, to tackle complex humanitarian emergencies.

It is easy to underline the need for greater responsiveness and flexibility. In an organization of 188 equal States, that is not always so easy to deliver. But we as a Council have to be clear that no peacekeeping mandate is set in stone, that operational changes are part of the Council's business and that the underlying principles and responsibilities of the United Nations must not be ignored or set aside.

We know that for a peacekeeping mission to work, there must be a peace to keep. And it is right that any peacekeeping mission must be based on the commitment of all parties to a peace accord. But at the same time we have to recognize where fault lines remain — and in any long-term conflict such fault lines will be deep and extend to the population at large, not just to political and military players. This principle is bound to apply in most peacekeeping operations, not least those currently before us in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We must also be prepared to recognize and respond to signs of a major shift in the political or humanitarian situation. As the report makes clear, this means that any peacekeeping operation needs to have both a political analysis capacity and a human rights monitoring capacity. This underlines the importance, moreover, of the continuing efforts of the United Nations to strengthen its rapid reaction capability.

We must ensure that lessons learned from Rwanda inform future Council discussions. The Rwanda and Srebrenica reports are inextricably linked to wider issues of United Nations peacekeeping capability and humanitarian preventive action. These issues have implications for other United Nations bodies, not just the Security Council. This point is borne out by current discussions on conflict prevention, which are detailing the need for a comprehensive approach going much wider than peacekeeping.

We therefore applaud the Secretary-General's intention to tackle these issues in a broad-ranging report on peace operations due to be issued this summer. Today's discussion must inform that process and lead to effective decisions by the Council which draw the right lessons from this appalling story.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): First of all, I would like once again to thank you, Mr. President, for coming to chair the Security Council debate here in New York. This bears witness to your and your country's dedication to and support for this organization and for humanitarian issues and conflict prevention, as well as the maintenance of international peace and security.

I would like to start by saying that we deeply appreciate the Secretary-General's decision to order an inquiry into the actions of the United Nations in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. As far as we are concerned, this is an exemplary gesture.

I would like to particularly pay tribute to you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative of organizing an open debate on the report of the Independent Inquiry, which was chaired by Prime Minister Carlsson and included Minister Sung-Joo and General Kupolati. It is a comprehensive and objective report. Without doubt it will be a fundamental landmark for the Council's work, because without forgetting the past, it looks towards the future.

It is essential, I believe, that all of us, without exception — the Security Council, the other bodies of the Organization and the United Nations in general, as well as the international community as a whole — should think about our mistakes, our failings and our lack of resolve in Rwanda. We must do so with humility and with a deep sense of self-criticism. The United Nations did nothing, or at least not enough, to prevent or halt the genocide in Rwanda. We abandoned the Rwandese people at the time they needed us the most. Perhaps this was because we

were not prepared from the military and political point of view, but perhaps also because we were not psychologically prepared to confront the events which developed in Rwanda six years ago.

I do not think it is helpful to begin to allocate blame, but we must take into consideration that following upon this bitter lesson, the peoples of the world will not forgive us if in the future we fail to prevent or to rapidly and effectively respond to a genocide or to a massive violation of human rights.

The Rwandese tragedy inescapably leads us to think about three fundamental and interrelated issues: conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations, and the strengthening of international standards of protection for human rights and humanitarian law.

As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report on the work of the Organization for 1999:

> "The main short- and medium-term strategies for preventing non-violent conflicts from escalating into war, and preventing earlier wars from erupting again, are preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment, and preventive disarmament." *(A/54/1, para. 36)*

The United Nations of the twenty-first century must gradually become a source of preventive measures. Preventive diplomacy calls for an accurate assessment of events, economic resources and, most importantly, political will. We believe these factors were lacking in Rwanda in 1994.

As regards peacekeeping operations, there are four points that I consider essential.

First, peacekeeping operations must be endowed with a clear, realistic mandate commensurate with the established goals and backed by the necessary political, military and moral decisions.

Secondly, financial resources must be dependable and adequate. Voluntary funding can be a useful tool, but never a substitute for regular contributions.

Thirdly, there must be reasonable security guarantees for United Nations, associated and humanitarian personnel. In this regard, we would like to reiterate our call for the ratification of the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel in peacekeeping operations, and we recall presidential statement S/PRST/2000/4, adopted on 9 February 2000 following the open debate held by the Security Council on this topic.

Fourth, in cases such as that of Rwanda, the mandate must include clear rules for the protection of civilians. When any deliberate attempt to carry out serious attacks on the civil population occurs, the United Nations cannot remain indifferent — it has a moral imperative to act. Security Council resolutions 1270 (1999) and 1291 (2000), establishing the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and extending the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), respectively, are a step in the right direction. They enable the Blue Helmets, in specific circumstances, to act under Chapter VII of the Charter to defend the civilian population. I think this is one of the lessons learned in Rwanda and Srebrenica. A false idea of impartiality must not be allowed to prevail when genocide or crimes against humanity are being committed. It is against this background, and within a broad interpretation of the idea of international peace and security, that we must understand the concept of human security, and the open debate proposed by Canada for 19 April on the protection of civilians in armed conflict is an initiative that we unequivocally support.

The need to strengthen standards for the protection of human rights and international humanitarian law is another element that must be studied, following the Carlsson report. It is clear that with certain limitations, there is already an adequate normative framework. The fact of the matter is, however, that there is a wide gap between the existence of these legal standards and their observance. This is why it is indispensable to establish appropriate national and international machinery to fight impunity. Justice is an essential component of a stable peace. The genocide in Rwanda and other crimes against humanity must not go unpunished. In this context, we support the work of the International Tribunal for Rwanda, and we are convinced that the entry into force of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court will contribute to creating an awareness that impunity will not be tolerated.

The Argentine public learned yesterday, through the Buenos Aires newspaper *Clarín*, of the moving declarations of General Romeo Dallaire, Force Commander of United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda. Referring to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, he said: "I know that God exists because I have shaken

hands with the devil." The events in Rwanda must move us all to deep reflection and analysis. As the Secretary-General has said in his report on the fall of Srebrenica,

> "The United Nations global commitment to ending conflict does not preclude moral judgements, but makes them necessary." (*A/54/549, para. 506*)

The President: I would like to thank the representative of Argentina for his very appreciative words on the role of General Dallaire.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, Mr. President, we would like to associate ourselves with the words of gratitude to you for having organized our discussion of the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the time of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

The Russian delegation has carefully studied the report, which reminds us of that terrible period when 800,000 entirely innocent people in Rwanda fell victim to an ethnic conflict that was rightly described by the international community as genocide. We are grateful to the authors of the report for their painstaking analysis of what could have been done by the international community to prevent that horrendous crime and of what, for a variety of reasons, was not done. Unfortunately, history does not know the conditional tense, and the clock cannot be turned back. Those who fell victim to genocide in Rwanda in 1994 cannot be resurrected from the dead, but we agree with the view that lessons must be drawn from the past to see to it that what happened in 1994 in Rwanda never happens again.

The Russian delegation believes that in preparing new peacekeeping operations, very careful account should be taken by the Security Council of the results of the analysis of actions by the United Nations in Rwanda during the time of the 1994 genocide. Unfortunately, the world is not perfect, and even the capacity of an authoritative body such as the Security Council of the United Nations is not unlimited, to say nothing of the capacity of individual countries represented on the Council. Nevertheless, Russia attaches great importance to a careful analysis of provisions for protecting civilians in areas where United Nations peacekeeping operations are being conducted. We must attempt, on the one hand, to ensure that peacekeepers provide maximum protection for innocent civilians and, on the other hand, to avoid creating illusions that are not backed up by the real capacities of United Nations personnel.

In the broader context, we again take note of the desirability of developing norms of international law, adapting them to new realities in order to produce a proper international legal interpretation of humanitarian crises and making it possible to respond to them properly. That was precisely the thrust of the President of Russia's proposal that consideration be given to the legal aspects of the use of force in international relations in our globalizing world.

Concerning the current situation in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes region as a whole, of course we share the conclusions of the report regarding the need for the international community to assist the Rwandans in dealing with the effects of the genocide and in punishing the perpetrators. At the same time, we believe that the spinning wheel of violence, one rotation of which was the genocide in Rwanda, must be finally stopped. In other words, we call upon all forces involved in the conflicts in the Great Lakes region to lay down their arms and intensify the search for a political settlement to these conflicts, which could ultimately lead to a comprehensive settlement of the situation in the region within the context of an international conference on the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Mohammad Kamal (Malaysia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this open briefing today on the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The formal consideration of this first-of-its-kind document is overdue. For too long, the Organization has shied away from acknowledging a serious flaw in judgement in its handling of the situation in Rwanda. The 1994 slaughter of the 800,000 people still reverberates today, and in order for us to exorcise this ghastly failure, we must muster the courage to accept and recognize, in all humility, our shortcomings. More importantly, we must learn from the tragedy and not allow a repetition of Rwanda in any part of the world.

In this regard, we would also like to express our appreciation to the former Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Ingvar Carlsson, for introducing a sobering, critical report that has catalogued in painful detail how the United Nations ignored abundant warnings of impending carnage and withdrew most of its peacekeeping force as the massacres began.

We also wish to commend Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his decision in commissioning the report and for his courage in making a public expression of his

profound regret and acknowledgement of responsibility. Malaysia believes that it is for the good of the Organization that the truth be made known. We must restore the credibility of this Organization and, more importantly, contribute to the healing and reconciliation process of the Rwandan people.

Aside from its account of what actually happened, the report of the Independent Inquiry is also noteworthy for the timing of its release. Its issuance, on 16 December 1999, came on the heels of an equally critical internal report detailing how, in July 1995, the United Nations allowed the Bosnian Muslim safe area of Srebrenica to be overrun by Bosnian Serbs. Together, these inquiries have established an admirable new standard of candour at the United Nations. They could point the way towards more effective international action if similar situations were to arise in the future.

We can succeed only if we are honest with ourselves and have a clear idea of what has been wrong up to now. We must strive for a clear set of criteria and guidelines on how, in future, to better implement and coordinate the whole range of United Nations activities in the area of peace and security.

The report has clearly assigned responsibility for the limitations of the original mandate given to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) where it belongs. It is clear that an inadequate and flawed analysis underpinned the recommendations to the Council, which accepted the recommendation that the Mission be composed of fewer troops than the field mission had considered necessary. UNAMIR's mandate was cautious from its inception; it was to become equally cautious in its application on the ground. The mandate was applied in a manner which would preserve a neutral role for UNAMIR under a traditional peacekeeping mandate — one that was grossly inadequate to halt the genocide. This was the scope of the action that was perceived to have support in the Security Council. Despite a deteriorating security situation which should have prompted a more robust and preventive role for the United Nations, no steps were taken to adjust the mandate to the realities of the situation on the ground.

Council members must also share the responsibility — obviously, some more than others. There was no will to deploy a more substantial force or to use "all necessary means" to protect civilians at risk. It is clear from the report that an adequate number of properly trained, equipped and supported troops could have averted the horrific tragedy.

It has often been said that UNAMIR was an operation which was established in the shadow of Somalia. In particular, the tragic deaths of United Nations peacekeepers in Somalia in 1993 had a deep effect on the attitude towards the conduct of peacekeeping operations. The experience of Somalia appears to have had a constraining effect on the Secretariat, in particular with regard to the risks that could be assumed during peacekeeping operations and in respect of the interpretation of mandates. Nevertheless, while criticism can be levelled at the mistakes and limitations of the capacity of UNAMIR's troops, responsibility should also be shared by the great majority of United Nations Member States, which were not prepared to send any troops or *matériel* to Rwanda.

My delegation welcomes the commissioning, release and discussion of the report. It throws much light on the circumstances surrounding the tragedy that engulfed Rwanda, which is extremely useful to States Members of this Organization. However, many questions that should have been addressed by the Independent Inquiry were kept in abeyance. Such questions revolve around the identity of perpetrators and possible accomplices in the murderous attack that claimed the lives of the heads of State of Rwanda and of Burundi. That attack, as pointed out in many parts of the report, served as a catalyst for the Rwandan genocide. We note that the report is based on evidence collected from only one side in the conflict, that is, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) and its collaborators. Similar interviews with other personalities in exile could have proved useful. Such exiles include members of the two successive transition Governments before the assassination of President Habyarimana, as well as members of the first RPF Government who had to flee the country.

We think it would perhaps have been useful for the Independent Inquiry to have included in its recommendations the setting up of a more comprehensive and detailed commission of inquiry on the Rwandan genocide. We believe that Rwandans mourn not only the Tutsis and moderate Hutus who were massacred in 1994, but also other Hutus and Tutsis who were massacred before and after that period by extremists from all sides. Such an inquiry, while painful, would serve to bring this great tragedy to closure, thereby contributing to the necessary process of reconciliation between the two ethnic groups, which is important for the future peace and tranquillity of the region.

We note the Organization's admission, in the aftermath of the 1994 tragedy, that it had, indeed, learned some lessons from Rwanda. It had failed to respond to several warnings of the impending genocide. Six months before the massacre, for example, a report by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva signalled what was to come, but the report never made it to the desks of senior peacekeeping officials in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, who might have acted on it. The failure of communication within the Secretariat and with the Security Council is less likely now. However, better internal communication is not the whole answer. The ability of the United Nations to respond to crises can be only as strong as the will of its leading members to provide the necessary resources. It is regrettable that the Council's failure to prevent the slaughter in Rwanda has led many to question its perceived selectivity when deciding to intervene in conflict situations.

The United Nations may not be able to meet all of the world's many humanitarian challenges. But this report from the Independent Inquiry, coming on the eve of the new millennium, should be a turning point for this Organization. The Organization must make a difference to populations at risk whenever necessary, wherever they happen to be. The shame of the Srebrenica massacre was that the United Nations had stationed a token peacekeeping force in the town, large enough for it to claim that it cared about the fate of Bosnian Muslims, but too small to actually help them. The shame of Rwanda, likewise, is that the United Nations did send a token force to the region but then stood by as the horror unfolded. We must learn from the lessons of this tragedy and come to terms with our acts of omission. In this regard, it is imperative that we give serious consideration to the 14 recommendations of the report, which, if adhered to, would ensure non-repetition of the tragic blunder made in respect of Rwanda. We must thank the authors of the report for speaking out without fear or favour.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to thank you, Mr. President, and the entire delegation of Canada for having organized this open briefing. I wish at the same time to thank Mr. Ingvar Carlsson for his useful statement on the report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. I commend the members of the Inquiry for their work, which led to a report of great importance and historic value.

We should like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his praiseworthy initiative to task the Inquiry with establishing the facts about the behaviour of the Organization with respect to the genocide in Rwanda so that the entire international community, the United Nations and Member States might draw the lessons needed to prevent such tragedies in the future.

Six years ago, the people of Rwanda suffered a tragedy that left a mark on its history: the massacre of 800,000 people. The international community, and in particular the United Nations, did not prevent that genocide and did not react in time to bring it to a halt. The report of the Independent Inquiry sheds light on this dark period of Rwanda's history and on the international community's failings during the tragedy. The report will inevitably enhance awareness and will be the basis of in-depth reflection on how to predict and prevent tragedies of this kind.

The Independent Inquiry has set out a series of conclusions and recommendations that deserve the full attention of States Members of the United Nations, of the Security Council and of the Secretariat. These will undoubtedly serve as a benchmark when future peacekeeping challenges arise.

Today's review in no way detracts from the valour, the courage and the sense of duty of the members of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), including Tunisian Blue Helmets, who on instructions from the Tunisian Government stood their ground during the terrible weeks of the genocide. The report of the Independent Inquiry refers to this, and commends it.

As the Independent Inquiry notes, some measures have been taken in recent years to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond to conflicts and to avoid some the mistakes made in Rwanda. But additional measures are needed to strengthen the capacity of the Organization to prevent future disasters. Political will and full support from the international community are indispensable if this undertaking is to succeed.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We thank the delegation of Canada for organizing today's meeting. Our thanks go also to Mr. Carlsson for introducing the report of the Independent Inquiry. The Inquiry has succeeded in summing up the experiences gained and lessons learned by the United Nations with respect to the massive killings in Rwanda. We convey our appreciation to the Inquiry for its conscientious and careful work.

The international community failed to prevent the tragedy that took place in Rwanda six years ago. The lessons to be drawn from that tragedy merit sober reflection. We believe that today's discussion will help us analyze the experiences and learn lessons with a view to effectively improving United Nations peacekeeping operations and to increasing the capacity of the Security Council to react to and deal with similar crises in the future.

The Inquiry made many recommendations touching upon a variety of areas. They have a bearing on coordination and cooperation among various United Nations departments. The recommendations relate to such matters as reform of the United Nations, enhancement of the efficiency of the Security Council, strengthening of the political will of Member States, mobilization of adequate resources, and many other matters. These recommendations warrant attention and study by the relevant departments, and deserve comprehensive consideration in the context of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century.

We have noted that in recent years the United Nations has been making efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its peacekeeping operations. How to carry out effective peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Sierra Leone, and how to transform the priority attention we give to African issues into action in such a way that success will be achieved and mistakes reduced to the minimum: these are matters of increasing public concern. We believe that summarizing the lessons and experience gained from the Rwanda tragedy will be illuminating in that regard.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to welcome Mr. Carlsson and to thank him for the report before the Council today, which describes the horror of the genocide committed between April and July 1994:

> "Rwandans killed Rwandans, brutally decimating the Tutsi population of the country, but also targetting moderate Hutus. Appalling atrocities were committed, by militia and the armed forces, but also by civilians against other civilians.
>
> "The international community did not prevent the genocide, nor did it stop the killing once the genocide had begun". (*S/1999/1257, annex, p. 3*)

The debate that you have organized, Mr. President, provides an opportunity for us to think about the lessons to be learned. More than ever before, we need to ensure that the United Nations will no longer remain inactive or powerless in the face of such tragedies.

But I wish first to welcome the initiative taken by the Secretary-General, who had the courage to task the Independent Inquiry with investigating the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide. We support that initiative. When the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hubert Védrine, received the Independent Inquiry last November, he said that France shared this determination to achieve transparency and effectiveness. In France, that determination was reflected in the 1998 establishment of a parliamentary fact-finding mission on Rwanda. Let us in turn have the courage together to look the truth in the face.

The United Nations seriously failed in its mission. The report of the Independent Inquiry provides a thorough analysis of the mistakes that led to the failure of the United Nations in Rwanda. The report highlights the shortcomings of decisions taken before the outbreak of genocide: the inadequate mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), the lack of resources provided for the Mission, poor use of information, and an inability to adapt the mandate of the Mission to the requirements of the situation on the ground.

The report also highlights the serious mistakes that resulted in a "Failure to respond to the genocide" (ibid., p. 35), a lack of determination to strengthen UNAMIR, inability to understand the real nature of events and to decide on what action should be taken.

Of course, as the investigators say, the situation in 1994 was particularly tense. The United Nations had deployed about 70,000 Blue Helmets throughout the world, and several missions were facing difficulties. These elements certainly affected decision-making. We should also pay tribute to the troops of UNAMIR, those of Belgium, and particularly of Ghana and Tunisia, who remained there on the ground and, as well as they could, protected the threatened civilians.

However, the overall picture is one of failure. The United Nations was not able to assist the Rwandans and, as the Inquiry stresses, all of us — Security Council members, the Secretariat, States Members of the Organization — bear the heavy responsibility for this.

Before the United Nations undertook its own inquiry into actions in Rwanda, the French National Assembly set up a parliamentary fact-finding mission on Rwanda. The mission, which was presided over by Mr. Quiles, throughout 1998 gathered testimony from many participants in and witnesses to the tragedy. All of this information, in the spirit of transparency, was made public. This work made it possible to better understand several aspects of the Rwandan tragedy. Mr. Carlsson's Inquiry supplements those analyses.

From the report of the French Parliament, I note that France, before the events of 1994, had made an effort to avoid a military solution and to encourage the parties to share power in Rwanda. We need to place this tragedy in its historical context, which goes beyond the offensive by the Rwandese Patriotic Front in 1990, all the way back to events of 1959, the time of decolonization. The active support of France for the negotiations concluded in August 1993 in Arusha illustrated this policy. The accords reached were the framework in which lasting peace could have been established with mutual respect for all.

The parliamentary report also demonstrated that France, while aware of the risk of confrontation, underestimated the upsurge of extremism. Nevertheless, it tried to mobilize the international community, through the United Nations, to prevent a massacre. Mr. Carlsson's analysis shows that neither the other Member States present at the time nor the Secretariat used any better the information that, subsequently, was to prove crucial. This attitude goes a long way in explaining the inability of the United Nations to prevent the 1994 genocide. This tragedy still has one unclear area regarding elements that triggered the genocide, though this will no doubt be clarified one day.

In the face of the spring 1994 genocide and in the light of the delays and difficulties encountered in strengthening UNAMIR, France, in June, with the support of the troops of African countries, assisted the people who were under threat, and it did so in transparency and with the authorization of the Security Council. We are aware of the criticism, which we think unjustified, that Operation Turquoise elicited. But should we once again have stood by passively? The report submitted by Mr. Carlsson reflects some of this criticism, but it also says "many ... interlocutors have credited Operation Turquoise with saving a number of lives in a situation where few other initiatives were being taken" (ibid., p. 49). This is the point we wish to retain from that intervention.

Now we need to learn the lessons of this tragedy. Several comments could be made concerning the Great Lakes region, as well as the work of the Council and peacekeeping operations in general.

The Rwandan tragedy occurred in a particularly unstable environment. We recall in particular the massacres committed in Burundi in October of 1993 in an atmosphere of general passivity. Since 1994, this instability in the Great Lakes region has increased. After the failure to deal with the Rwandan genocide, the United Nations was not able to face up to subsequent crises.

In the months following 1994, the Council did not react in time to the problems caused by the presence of armed elements in the refugee camps in eastern Zaire.

In autumn of 1996, the Kivu crisis prompted the Council, at the urging, *inter alia*, of France, to authorize the dispatch of a multinational humanitarian force. Canada announced that it was prepared to head that operation. France said that it was willing to participate. The disagreement in the Council finally meant that the operation had to be abandoned. The international community once again remained inactive in the face of new massacres, the magnitude of which has not fully been measured.

As of August 1998, the Council was faced with a war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The information that reached us reported violence against civilian populations, particularly in the east of the country and attested to the seriousness of the situation. This time, will we be able to take the necessary action?

The events that occurred starting in 1994 are part of the context created by the Rwandan genocide. As we now consider Mr. Carlsson's report, we must draw conclusions for the work of the United Nations in the Great Lakes region.

Let us turn first to Rwanda. Mr. Carlsson's report calls upon the international community to help in reconstruction, reconciliation and observance of human rights. And we should add, to help in the matter of justice, which is essential to attain these goals. France supports this appeal. We participate in this effort together with our European Union partners. The Secretary-General has proposed to Rwanda a new partnership with the United Nations, and we hope that efforts on both sides will make it possible to make headway in this regard and that, in exchange for serious security

guarantees, Rwanda will move towards peaceful democracy, allowing a return to regional stability. This is definitely a source of concern for the international community.

Indeed, United Nations action with respect to the Great Lakes region as a whole must be more sustained. The Council has authorized the deployment of the second phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). We must ensure that this operation receives the necessary means, in particular the necessary funding. Impartial action by Council members vis-à-vis each of the belligerents, with a view to inducing them to fulfil their commitments, is also essential to buttress the July 1999 Lusaka Agreement, all of whose elements must be implemented.

The next mission of the Council to the territory will be an opportunity to get all of our messages through. But it is the effective deployment of the second phase of MONUC that will attest to the will of the international community to contribute fully to bringing about peace in the country and in the Great Lakes region.

Here it might be useful to recall the situation in Burundi. The Council lent its support to the facilitation process led by President Mandela and to the efforts of the Burundian parties. This process is a difficult one. In order to strengthen it, the international community must, now that sanctions against the country have been lifted, assist it by speedily resuming economic assistance, which is so necessary to the people.

Beyond the Great Lakes region, we must consider ways of stepping up United Nations action in crisis situations.

The report of the Inquiry makes some recommendations in this respect: a plan of action against genocide, improved deployment capacities of the United Nations, protection of civilians, and so on. We welcome this trend, which is conducive to better circulation of information in the United Nations and to a greater capacity to react to events. The report that the Secretary-General requested from the panel chaired by Mr. Brahimi will make it possible to conduct a deeper analysis of this situation.

Turning now to the work of the Council, two points need to be made.

First, in the setting up of new operations, decisions of the Council must be better prepared. The information provided by the Secretariat needs to be supplemented, according to modalities to be defined, by other data — particularly historical data — so that we can better understand the situations at hand.

We must also improve the Council's follow-up of United Nations missions. Experience has shown that once missions have been deployed in the field, implementation of their mandate is not always followed up carefully enough by the Council. We need greater regularity in this area. This means that we need to refocus our work on crisis situations and United Nations operations. We should spend more time considering these situations and less time on the so-called thematic subjects.

Our goal should be to place the Council in a better position to assess the risks faced by missions in the field and to adapt their mandate and their means accordingly.

In the face of violence and the massacre of civilians, the decisions of the Council, and, beyond that, those of the troop contributors will always be particularly difficult. When the time comes to commit the United Nations, will we be sufficiently mindful of the lessons drawn by the Inquiry into events in 1994 in Rwanda? We certainly hope so; otherwise, we would be betraying the memory of the victims.

The attitude of the Council to the violence committed in East Timor last September is an encouraging sign. The deployment of the multinational Force led by Australia made it possible to stop the violence. The Council made that decision in a very short space of time.

But we can also think of other situations where the Council did not take the necessary decisions to put an end to massive violations of human rights. Can the Council, duly informed, remain divided and do nothing? We do not think so.

At the opening of the most recent session of the General Assembly last September, the Secretary-General appealed to the international community to consider how the United Nations could intervene quickly and more effectively in these situations. A debate was launched, which we need to continue in order to enable the Council fully to play the role entrusted to it by the Charter and to avert in future humanitarian tragedies such as the ones our world has witnessed in recent decades.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Mr. President, I wish to thank you and your delegation for organizing this meeting. We commend the Secretary-General's decision to appoint an Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. I wish also to thank Prime Minister Carlsson and his team for the extensive work that they have carried out in the fulfilment of their mandate.

We all witnessed the horrifying events of the 1994 Rwanda genocide. Innocent Rwandese were brutally massacred by their neighbours and friends. Above all, these were fellow Rwandese.

The report clearly places on the international community the responsibility for the total lack of political will to prevent the human tragedy in Rwanda. The failure of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council, to respond to the tragedy was a terrible mistake, and we should now all work together for the good of humanity to ensure that never again shall we allow genocide to be repeated — anywhere.

The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda is commendable. We fully support it and hope that all of the perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity will be brought to justice. Namibia will continue to cooperate with the Tribunal, and we call on other States to hand over to the Tribunal all those who have been indicted.

The observations and recommendations of the Inquiry are pertinent and need to be taken into account when dealing with conflict situations around the globe. I will therefore not dwell on all of them but highlight a few salient points.

First and foremost, it is important for the international community to focus its resources on addressing the root causes of conflict and to be proactive in preventing conflict from occurring in the first place.

Secondly, Member States need to exercise the necessary political will to adequately address conflicts in a timely manner, irrespective of where they occur.

Thirdly, we cannot overemphasize the need to equip each and every United Nations peacekeeping mission with an appropriate mandate and with adequate human and material resources. It is true that peacekeeping is costly, but peace does not come cheap. More often, when peacekeeping missions are considered, troop size and the costs involved are foremost in the minds of Member States.

This brings me to my fourth point, concerning adequate planning for each operation with the necessary technical and political input. This is vital for the success of any peacekeeping mission. Furthermore continuous evaluation, monitoring and support are required and adjustments should be made to ensure that the mission is effectively dealing with the situation on the ground.

Fifthly, protection of civilians under threat should form part of peacekeeping mandates. The lessons learned from Rwanda clearly illustrate this point. I am therefore glad that next week we will take up the issue of the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

We have noticed with regret that despite the Rwanda experience, some of the problematic measures pointed out in the report as having contributed to inaction in Rwanda in 1994 are still being applied today as the United Nations considers taking action on certain conflict situations.

The recommendation for the Secretary-General to develop a plan of action to prevent genocide is most welcome. We look forward to receiving the plan, and we have no doubt that it will greatly inform the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance scheduled for the year 2001.

We call on the international community to assist the Rwandese society in its reconstruction and development efforts. We support the Inquiry's call for assistance, paying particular attention to the need for reconstruction, genuine national reconciliation and respect for human rights.

Finally, I wish to pay special tribute to General Dallaire and commend the United Nations personnel within UNAMIR and in the programmes and agencies, who at that difficult time made tremendous efforts under extremely dangerous conditions and saved lives of many civilians, political leaders and United Nations staff, as stated in the report. These brave men and women deserve recognition for their efforts.

We have all failed the people of Rwanda. Let us learn from past mistakes and failures and exercise the necessary political will to make this world a better place for all human kind to live in.

The President: I thank the representative of Namibia for his words of appreciation to General Daliaire and the other United Nations personnel in the field who have made such great efforts.

Mr. Ahmed (Bangladesh): Mr. President, we join other members of the Council in expressing our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, whom we welcome in our midst, and his colleagues on the Rwandese Inquiry commission for presenting us with an extremely valuable report. The report is a historic document establishing accountability for the action of the world body and its different organs, of individual Member States, of the international community in general and of the Rwandans involved in the genocide, and it does so in an objective manner in full transparency.

We commend the Canadian presidency, and your leadership, for the initiative in having us face the realities and responsibilities in a formal meeting of the Security Council. We do agree that emphasis should be put on the lessons to be learned from the Rwanda tragedy. The Rwanda experience should be kept in mind in our decision-making process so that we do not commit such terrible mistakes in the future.

Mr. Carlsson's report makes an elaborate analysis of the events. It does not hesitate to assign responsibility. We all share it, we all have to learn lessons. Our sympathy and our realization of collective failure should be expressed in the sincerest and clearest terms.

Last December the Secretary-General acknowledged the failure in Rwanda and expressed his deep remorse on behalf of the United Nations. The United Nations was established to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The explicit reference was to the two world wars. Civil wars were possibly considered a matter of the past and were hence not even envisaged. Yet, the unthinkable happened. Some 800,000 Rwandans were killed by their fellow countrymen, and the massacre was along the ethnic divide.

The evident conclusion is that what happened in Rwanda in 1994 should not have happened. It should not have happened in our century, particularly after the creation of the United Nations. The second conclusion drawn is that the genocide could have been prevented. The third conclusion is that it could not be prevented because the international system failed to do so and this failure was of colossal proportions, seen in terms of the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives in Rwanda.

The international community failed to prevent genocide in Rwanda, but it should not fail to do its part as regards the socio-economic development of Rwanda.

The best demonstration of our remorse, the best assurance of our realization of mistakes or failures would be to be able to act correctly in the future. That will be our best apology, that will be our best homage to the hundreds of thousands of fellow human beings massacred in Rwanda.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): First of all, let me join previous speakers in thanking you for presiding over today's open briefing on the situation in Rwanda. My delegation wishes to commend Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his historic initiative in setting up an independent inquiry to investigate the actions of the United Nations during the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. We also wish to express appreciation to Prime Minister Carlsson and the other members of the Commission for the thoroughness with which they discharged their mandate. Their analysis and conclusions in the report presented today by Mr. Carlsson are even more sobering as they point to one inescapable conclusion. The terrible events which occurred in Rwanda in 1994 were almost certainly preventable.

In this process of introspection, we are not seeking to attribute blame, but to understand the confluence of events and systemic deficiencies that allowed the genocide to take place unchecked, as we seek solutions which could prevent similar atrocities from occurring ever again.

As this debate is taking place in the Security Council, the focus must be on how this body can develop preventive measures that may be employed in the prevention of conflicts. The Security Council must assert its political will to strengthen its conflict prevention capabilities. We must become proactive and not wait until a great number of persons has died before we take action.

Understandably, many of the causes of conflict — social, economic, developmental and political — must be addressed by the international community as a whole. However, it remains the responsibility of this Council to prevent breaches of the peace. We cannot abdicate this responsibility. With crises such as those which occurred in Rwanda and in the Balkans, and which are occurring in many parts of Africa today, the credibility of the Security Council is constantly being questioned. We

therefore support the recommendations of the Carlsson commission and will work with members of the Security Council as we seek to move beyond acceptance of recommendations to action. To do otherwise would mean that 800,000 Rwandan men, women and children would certainly have died in vain.

The Carlsson report makes several facts clear. The slaughter of some 800,000 persons over a period of about 100 days, without the use of weapons of mass destruction, was certainly unprecedented in human history. The Tutsi population of Rwanda was savagely and brutally subjected to genocide. Many reasons have been proffered for the failure of the international community, the United Nations system and the Security Council in particular to act decisively to prevent one of the major tragedies of the twentieth century. This has been summarized as a persistent lack of political will by Member States to act or to act with enough assertiveness. Perhaps a major failure was the inability to recognize or acknowledge the tell-tale signs of impending catastrophe or to plan an effective response.

My delegation believes that extreme diligence must in future be exercised during the critical planning stages of peacekeeping missions. I therefore wish to address my remarks to one of the recommendations in the report which aims at improving the capacity of the United Nations to conduct peacekeeping operations.

From its inception, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) was hindered by a poorly conceived mandate, the lack of the necessary resources to carry out that mandate and the lack of political will on the part of the Security Council to take critical decisions at a time when the forces on the ground could ill afford undue delays. We wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the peacekeepers and the humanitarian personnel who sought to serve the cause of peace, even while the international community turned a blind eye.

My delegation wishes to point out two critical factors which must be built into future missions. First, peacekeeping missions need to be designed with allowances for rapidly changing circumstances. At the very minimum, it must be possible to have reinforcements deployed quickly to augment forces when it becomes clear that the situation on the ground warrants a reassessment of the mission. The practice of deploying the minimum number of troops on the basis of either political or financial expediency takes no account of the many variables that troops may be presented with once in the field. We cannot continue to send troops without the necessary room to manoeuvre when faced with unforeseen circumstances.

Secondly, the mandates for peacekeeping operations must reflect the realities on the ground and must be matched by the political will and the material means to implement those mandates. Mandates must also be formulated in close collaboration with all the parties involved in the conflict. While only the Security Council can legitimately authorize troop deployment and determine mandates, a mechanism must be designed to allow force commanders the necessary flexibility to determine their best course of action and be able to rapidly communicate their decisions to the Security Council. In this connection, we note the recommendations of the commission on the protection of civilians. This must be addressed in all future peacekeeping mandates.

Also, once troops are deployed, they must be under the command of one central authority. States should not unilaterally withdraw their contingents without reference to that central authority.

My delegation also endorses the commission's recommendation that the Secretary-General and the Member States use the opportunity provided by the Millennium Summit and Assembly to mobilize the political will to clearly address challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping. In this context, we look forward to the report of the Brahimi committee.

The Security Council, after the fact, took action to bring the perpetrators of the Rwanda genocide to justice by establishing the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. But we must not stop there. The Security Council, the United Nations system and, indeed, the international community as a whole have a moral obligation to ensure that we do, in fact, have the will to prevent another genocide from ever occurring. Perhaps today marks the first step. Rwanda will continue to need the assistance of the international community as it seeks to rebuild the economic, social and political bases of its society and to seek national reconciliation.

Let us not fail them a second time.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada.

Isaiah Berlin, the very well-known philosopher, once expressed the view that the primary duty of politics

was to avoid "extremes of suffering". This sage counsel has too often gone woefully unheeded, and nowhere more so than in the case of Rwanda. The genocide in that country all too brutally exposed the enduring, darker side of human nature and the reality of suspicion, destruction, hatred and unrestrained violence.

I doubt that anyone in this Chamber can look back at that time without remorse and without a great deal of sadness at the failure to help the people of Rwanda in their time of need. The unchecked brutality of the *génocidaires* made a mockery, once again, of the pledge "never again".

For the United Nations, the Rwandan tragedy came close to extinguishing belief in our capacity to fulfil its founding purpose. The presence of United Nations peacekeepers on the ground created a perception among civilians that they would be secure from violence. That such confidence in the United Nations was ill-founded is a matter of great shame and disappointment to all who support the principles and ideals which underpin the Charter.

Still, that those soldiers in blue berets, whose cries for support were so studiously ignored, still managed to save tens of thousands, is a source of pride and inspiration.

(*spoke in French*)

One peacekeeper, the Canadian Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire, announced his retirement this week. As he put it simply, "I am a casualty of Rwanda — an injured officer." His moral integrity, vision, insight and leadership under unimaginable circumstances shine as an example.

(*spoke in English*)

I know that the words that have been so generously expressed by many around the table about his work, and that of all those who served in the field, will go a long way towards helping heal some of the scars of that experience.

The report of the Independent Inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide graphically chronicles, as we heard this morning, the lapses, blunders and shortcomings. It also draws lessons to which we must pay close attention.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to Prime Minister Carlsson and his colleagues for their work. Like many members, I wish to commend Secretary-General Annan for making certain that we did not forget and for publicly acknowledging this Organization's failure in the tragedy.

The Council must share in the responsibility for this tragedy. The best way to honour the victims now is through a firm commitment never to turn away from civilians victimized by armed conflict, but instead to focus energy and attention to protect them, in both word and deed.

The Inquiry's recommendations make clear what needs to be done. First, the culture of impunity must end. There is an undeniable, growing international consensus that those responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity should be held to account. The establishment by the Council of the Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda moved this forward. The adoption of the Statute of the International Criminal Court is its clearest expression yet. Council members have a special responsibility to ensure that the Statute of the Court is ratified rapidly and to make sure it works effectively. This will be a major deterrent to future abuse. Let the message be unambiguous and clearly understood: violators will be pursued, prosecuted and punished.

The report of the Inquiry also makes it very clear that information flow must be improved. It leaves no doubt that the Council must enhance its ability to analyse and monitor volatile situations and that information-sharing within the United Nations system must be made better, especially between the Council and United Nations departments. To that end, we welcome the efforts by the United Nations Secretariat and by the United Nations humanitarian agencies to develop a framework for coordination with an emphasis on prevention and preparedness.

For its part, the Security Council needs to continue to broaden its range of interlocutors and sources of information. The more varied its channels, the greater the chance that it will hear the signals of looming dangers.

This Council has nothing to fear from allowing the voices of suffering and oppression to be heard early, often and openly. This does not undermine the Council's legitimacy or its capacity to act. On the contrary, it serves to strengthen it.

Rapid and resolute response is also essential. Yet at a time when requests for troops to help protect civilians

are growing, the capacity of the United Nations itself to manage complex missions is under great strain.

Enhancing United Nations standby arrangements, including a rapidly deployable mission headquarters capacity, is vital to reversing this trend. So is a coordinated, integrated approach to identify, mobilize and commit the necessary military — and, indeed, civilian — resources. Yet efforts to implement these forward-looking approaches are, quite frankly, left to languish.

The Security Council is on the frontline with regard to this fundamental question. It is not enough just to authorize peace operations; it is time for the Council to become more actively engaged in making sure the capacity is there to carry out these missions quickly and effectively.

The Council also needs to ensure that United Nations operations are given adequate finances, the necessary resources, suitably robust mandates and clear rules of engagement to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

There are signs that the Council is taking this to heart. Missions in Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic and East Timor have the mandates and personnel commitments to adequately protect people and to address the realities on the ground. But the Council's response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo suggests that there is still room for improvement.

Together, these measures, if we follow through, will allow us to better resolve conflict, promote peace, enhance human security and help to prevent humanitarian disasters.

But if we are honest with ourselves, there is no certainty that the most severe abuses, such as those that occurred in Rwanda, will not happen again. Indeed, there is ample evidence to the contrary. Preventive efforts will not always succeed. The spiral into extremes of human suffering cannot always be constrained.

In these most exceptional situations, the protection of civilians requires strengthening our disposition to intervene with force if necessary. Let me be very clear. Military intervention is called for only in the most severe cases: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and massive and systematic violations of human rights and humanitarian law causing widespread suffering and loss of life. The test we have in mind is very difficult. The threshold is very high.

The goal of intervention is not to threaten the territorial integrity of the State, but to bring an end to widespread suffering. Indeed, outside intervention to protect people is conceivable only when those who control the State are unable or patently unwilling to fulfil this basic, fundamental trust.

In our view, any discussion about the use of force to alleviate extremes of suffering and the Council's role in such action needs to address three considerations, the first of which is the justification for action. The cumulative weight of international human rights and humanitarian law, the global trend against impunity and the precedents set by the Council itself all justify action. There is a growing body of common law that is beginning to establish new humanitarian standards that must be recognized.

Secondly, we must look at the guidelines for action. Once the determination has been made that the violence, real or anticipated, meets the test, there are other factors with which to guide a decision to intervene or not to intervene, including whether time has finally run out on other peaceful means to resolve the threat; whether there is a danger that the threat, if left alone, jeopardizes regional or international security; and whether not being able to intervene everywhere means we must not intervene anywhere.

Thirdly, there must be a framework for action. This should be permissive enough to stop massive and systematic violations, but clearly balanced with strong safeguards to ensure that it is not misused. To this end, we need to be certain that the severity of the crisis is fully corroborated; that military force can and will contribute to ending widespread suffering and loss of life; that the level of force employed is appropriate to the circumstances; that the use of force is multilateral and widely supported; and that it is part of a longer-term strategy to build and sustain peace.

Many have suggested that this is a debate that the Council is not yet ready to engage in. However, it is a discussion we cannot and should not avoid having, and the sooner we have it, the better. The price of inaction has simply been too high — for the victims of the Rwandan genocide, for others subject to extreme abuse, for the security of people generally and for the credibility of this Organization.

Perhaps if we had grappled with this very difficult subject earlier and worked to arrive at some common agreement on it, we might have done more to avoid the Rwandan genocide or to stop it once it began. Second chances are rare, but we have one now. Perhaps the most important proposal contained in the report of the Inquiry is that for a system-wide action plan to prevent genocide, to which I would add all crimes against humanity and war crimes. As the representative of Jamaica said, the Millennium Assembly offers an opportunity to work towards this goal and, as the Secretary-General suggests, to "reassert the centrality of international humanitarian and human rights law". *(A/54/2000, para. 211)*

In that context, the legacy of the Rwandan genocide is not just tragic; it is also hopeful. In his very graphic and dramatic book, Philip Gourevitch tells of how a group of young, defenceless Hutu girls in a Catholic convent school refused to leave the side of their Tutsi friends, even though ordered to do so by the *génocidaires*. Given the choice of freedom from that kind of suffering, they chose to stay, and paid the ultimate price: their lives. The courage and sacrifice of those young women in that convent school should be a guide and inspiration to people around this table and everywhere, for we can do no less.

The development of a United Nations action plan to protect people from the most egregious forms of abuse and from the most serious violators will be too late for past victims but, hopefully, not too late for us and for future generations.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker is the representative of Rwanda, on whom I now call.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor on a subject of great importance to my country and to the family of the United Nations as a whole. I thank Canada for convening this open debate on the Carlsson report today, almost four months to the day since the report was issued. My appreciation and congratulations also go to your distinguished predecessors, Sir, whose leadership of the Council led this body in its wise deliberations. We wish you all the best.

We wholeheartedly thank all members for their statements, and for their words of regret, sympathy and support for us and for those who perished — especially those who bravely died trying to save lives.

The Government and the people of Rwanda wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan for commissioning such a courageous report on behalf of the Organization; we congratulate him. The United Nations, the world and Rwanda owe thanks and appreciation to former Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson and his team, which was composed of Mr. Han Sung-Joo and Lieutenant General Rufus M. Kupolati, assisted by Ms. Elinor Hammarskjöld and Mr. Lee Shin-wha, for their painstaking and comprehensive work in compiling what is known today as the Carlsson report. The report describes in fine detail what happened and what did not happen when it was or was not meant to happen during a specific period of time during Rwanda's genocide while United Nations peacekeeping forces were on the ground in my country. Every word, every phrase, every paragraph contains details of what went wrong, when, how and — shyly — why.

This is the time for us not to dwell on the past but clearly to state what comes next and to maintain the momentum. The world and Rwanda are now waiting to hear from all members of the Security Council; we have already heard their statements, for which we thank them, but what comes next? As a committed and concerned Member of the United Nations, my country, Rwanda, wishes to hear from all members of the Council about the policies and measures that this body has taken or has the intention of taking to make sure that what tragically happened in Rwanda, as witnessed on the world's television screens, never again occurs elsewhere on the globe. The report shows beyond any possible doubt that the world failed Rwanda. The Rwandese Government and the Rwandese people are grateful to those who have put their hands on their hearts and apologized on behalf of their peoples and their Governments for failing Rwanda. I know that this is not an easy thing to do; it is a courageous stand that is meant to reconcile us with the sad past. We wish also to reiterate our sincere thanks to those who assisted us in difficult times; those times are not yet gone.

Every Rwandese person — and indeed every friend of Rwanda — has been in one way or another a victim of what happened. Victims of genocide in Rwanda are cruelly suffering from physical, psychological and post-traumatic hardships. The Government of Rwanda is bleeding itself to contain their cries, but in vain given the overwhelming dimension of the problem and the scarce means it has at hand. The Carlsson report's conclusions and recommendations are worth revisiting to make sure that nothing of this sort happens again. Moreover,

recommendations 13 and 14 specifically appeal to all, as individual Member States, for belated action so that victims of genocide, including the bitterest, most desperate survivors, can feel the wind of change coming their way from the international community. A unique "mini-Marshall plan" is needed for Rwanda, as many members often rightly say in the corridors of this building, but on an individual basis. It is possible to shock the world again — but by doing something dramatically positive at last. All members can do this as individual countries, and as countries of the world.

It is never too late to make things right or to mend fences. The Rwandese people whom the whole community failed had the right to life and lost their best gift from God. I believe they too have an ear to listen to what we are saying today; we pay tribute to them. The country and the survivors lost everything they worked for and lived for. I am here representing them all. They too have a right to justice, recovery, rehabilitation, reintegration and genuine reconciliation as part of a concerted compensation effort from individual members and from others, from the countries of Council members and from the rest of the membership of the Organization. We have concerns. The Carlsson report is the members' report. What they do with it is what matters to the world and to the victims. If the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese people can assist members to assist them better, let me reiterate our full support and cooperation where immediate action is of the essence.

The report clearly challenges the conscience of the international community and invokes the responsibilities of the parties to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Reluctance to acknowledge that genocide was going on in Rwanda was nothing but a manifestation of the unwillingness of the powerful to live up to that responsibility. It is a fact that many of those who masterminded the genocide in Rwanda are at large to this day. As Rwanda struggles to rebuild itself, surely let the words of the Secretary-General, who is not with us today, be a basis for action:

> "Of all my aims as Secretary-General, there is none to which I feel more deeply committed than that of enabling the United Nations never again to fail in protecting a civilian population from genocide or mass slaughter". (*Press release SG/SM/7263, 16 December 1999*)

That should be a statement not only of the Secretary-General, but of the Security Council and of us all.

We hope that, in this way, General Dallaire and the survivors of the genocide will be given a chance to shake hands with God and with the other heroes: those amongst us who have made long-term partnerships with Rwanda to rebuild the country and to restore the badly torn fabric of Rwandese society.

The President: I now call on Mr. Carlsson.

Mr. Carlsson: I think that the statement just made by the representative of Rwanda should be the last statement in this debate.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.